YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE PROFESSIONAL DESIGN BUSINES

COMPUTER arts projects

THE IN-DEPTH GUIDE FOR DIGITAL CREATIVES

EXPERT TIPS AND TECHNIQUES!

EXPERT Photosho & Illustrato tutorials inside!

Promote Yourself!

Get Into Galleries

Leading artists show you how to make it big in the design world

EXPERT ADVICE:

- Top designers reveal their first big break p12
- Dealing with clients in the real world p18
- How onlin

If your CD is missing, please consult your newsagent

COMPUTER ARTS PROJECTS
$13.99
02
7 25274 92013 6
PRINTED IN ENGLAND

COMPUTER arts projects

CONTENTS

AT A GLANCE

COMPLETE PROJECT
12 Getting your first job
18 Handling clients
24 Preparing a portfolio
30 Creating an online portfolio
56 Establishing your own identity
64 Creating a corporate logo

FEATURES
48 How to get your work in galleries
74 Setting up your own business
90 Plug-ins round-up

PROFILES
82 Studio aka
86 David Foldvari

COMPETITIONS
10 Win a trip to exhibit your work at Drupa in Dusseldorf!
79 Win five PR books

SUBSCRIBE
54 Special subscription offer
89 North American subs offer

REGULARS
06 CD contents
80 Back issues
96 Book reviews
98 Next issue

FEATURES

In-depth articles about exhibiting, starting a business and practical workflow solutions...

48 Getting into galleries

We speak to a range of digital artists and gallery owners about what you have to do to get your creations exhibited

74 Taking care of business

Everything you need to know about setting up your own business, being organised, finding clients and getting paid

90 Practical plug-ins

Twelve of the most effective *Photoshop* plug-ins out there, from easy interfaces to moody skies and night vision

PROFILES

Two successful businesses share their secrets...

82 Studio aka

With clients such as the BBC and Orange in its portfolio, this animation house is no stranger to high-profile jobs. Find out how Studio aka keeps the work coming in

86 David Foldvari

David's work reflects the negative side of life, but the originality and truth of his vision has attracted major clients such as Nike and the *Financial Times* magazine

Top-right: Established animation by Studio aka. Right: Original works by David Foldvari.

YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE PROFESSIONAL DESIGN BUSINESS
computer arts projects
EXPERT TIPS AND TECHNIQUES!
Promote Yourself!
Leading artists show you how to make it big in the design world
Get Into Galleries
Make the Best Contacts
Create a Killer Logo
Manage Your Business
Wow People with your Portfolio
EXPERT ADVICE:
Top designers reveal their first big break p12
Dealing with clients in the real world p18
How to create a great online portfolio p30

FULL PROJECT

Follow our complete guide to running a successful design business...

PROMOTE YOURSELF!

SECTION ONE: BREAKING IN

12 Getting your first design job

We ask eight designers how they broke into the industry, including Frazer Irving of *2000 AD* fame and Pixelsurgeon's Jason Arber

18 Handling clients

Are you doing enough to establish good relationships with your clients? We show you how to keep them sweet...

SECTION TWO: PRESENTING YOURSELF

24 Preparing a great portfolio

Some leading industry figures explain what they're looking for in your portfolio

30 Creating an online portfolio

Our 16-page tutorial shows you how to build a Website with *Photoshop* and *Dreamweaver*

SECTION THREE: PROMOTING YOURSELF

56 Establishing your own identity

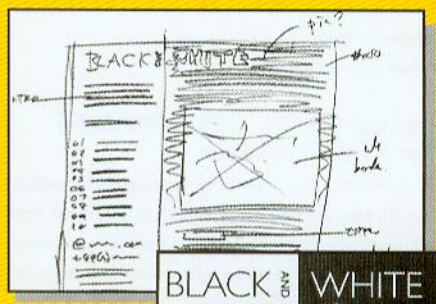
The experts give advice on choosing a name for your business and how to come up with imaginative marketing strategies

64 Creating a logo

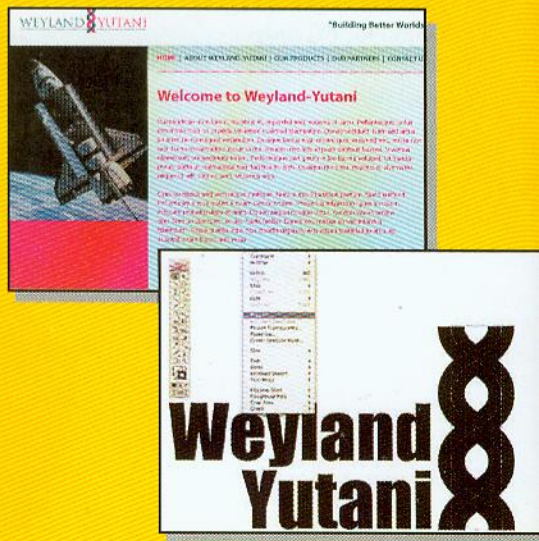
A ten-page tutorial explaining how to design a logo and create corporate stationery such as business cards, invoices and leaflets

Work along with our tutorials using the files on our cover disc...

TUTORIALS START ON P30



Follow our 26 pages of tuto this month to create an onl portfolio (pa 30) and a corporate id (page 64).



COMPUTER arts projects INTERACTIVE

On the CD

Your guide to the free extras given away on this issue's cover disc...

Software

FlashAmp – FULL PRODUCT
Mac & PC compatible

FlashAmp is an audio visualisation and lip-sync utility for Macromedia Flash MX and Flash 5. It enables you to synchronise animations to sound, draw sound waveforms, draw VU meters and use audio cue points in Flash. As well as the software, you will also find a Flash source example file on the CD and a walkthrough on page 8 to show you how to use the application.

Marmalade Media

[w] www.marmalademedia.com.au/

The Logo Creator – FULL PRODUCT
Mac & PC compatible

The Logo Creator does just what its name suggests: it creates logos! It's a fast and easy way to produce a professional, high-quality logo for your small business, for your Website, or for a client's Website. All the logos supplied with the software can be customised in countless ways.

Laughing Bird software [w] www.thelogocreator.com

Photo Basic
Freeware for PC only

Fully functional and with no time limitation, Photo Basic includes a full range of filters and effects, and can manage up to 200 photos in its archive.

H & M Software [w] www.studioline.net

StudioLine Photo 2
Demo for PC only

StudioLine Photo 2 makes managing and editing photo collections easy. Functions include: organising, filing, editing, improving, exporting, printing, emailing, Web galleries, slideshows and everything else you could need for your digital images, whether you're an average home user or a seasoned photo pro.

H & M Software [w] www.studioline.net/EN/

Graphics

Selection 1 Plug-ins – FULL PRODUCT

A selection of full Photoshop and Illustrator plug-ins (PC only) courtesy of Abneil Software.

Abneil software Ltd [w] www.graphicxtras.com/

CD Writing

Nero 6

Demo for PC only

Nero 6 is a whole suite of applications wrapped around the project launcher Nero StartSmart. You can manage all your CD and DVD burning tasks with ease. Nero 6 will burn DVD-video, photo, data, audio or backup disks and much more.

Ahead [w] www.ahead.de

Fonts

Dr Alarm – FULL PRODUCT

Alarm font for Mac and PC worth $25.

Cape-Arcona Type Foundry [w]www.cape-arcona.com

10 Fonts

10 freeware fonts for both Mac and PC, courtesy of Cape-Arcona.

Cape-Arcona Type Foundry [w]www.cape-arcona.com

Video Tutorials

Creating Websites Part 1 (AVI format)

A series of video tutorials in AVI format outlining the process of creating a Website. The tutorial shows you how to mix design and development using the authoring packages Adobe Photoshop 7 and Dreamweaver MX.

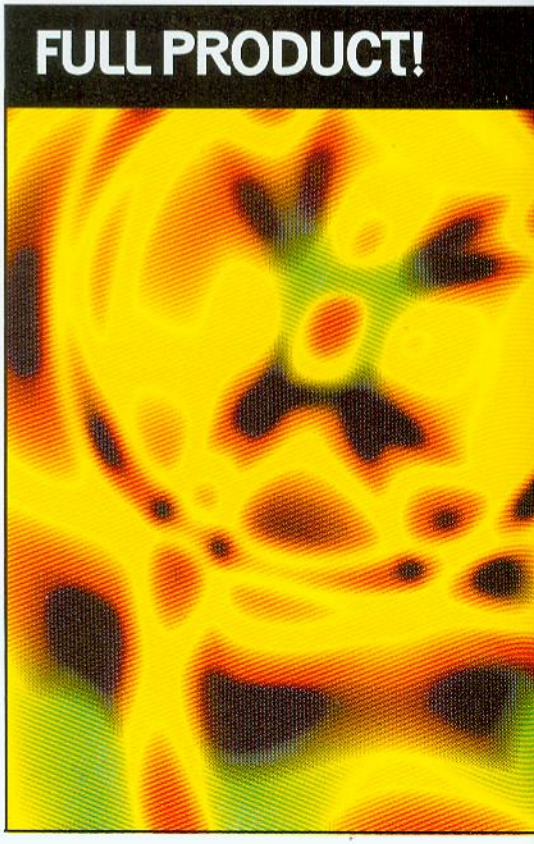
WZ2K [w] www.wz2k.co.uk

Tutorials

Source images and other supporting files for our tutorials in this issue:

- Online portfolio
- Illustrator logo

These files are supplied so that you can try out our tutorials for yourself, and not for any other use. They are copyright and not for redistribution in any form. Source images are not supplied for other features this issue because of copyright restrictions.



FULL PRODUCT!

The Logo Creator 3.5

Corporate Edition 2 & Value Pack – Total Value $130
Mac and PC compatible (Mac OS 9 and OS X; Win98,Win2000, WinXP)
Laughing Bird Software [w] www.thelogocreator.com

It can be extremely costly to employ design agencies to create your corporate identity. But even if you're a designer yourself, the prospect of creating your own logo can be daunting. The Logo Creator 3.5 from Laughing Bird Software is a simple tool that enables you to create your own high-quality logos in minutes. You can use the result as it stands or you can work on it further in your preferred graphics applications. Each and every logo can be customised in countless ways.

The software comes in eight themed versions, giving you more choice over the type of logos required for your business. The themes include: The Corporate Edition 1, The Corporate Edition 2, The Corporate Edition 3, The Leisure Set, The Cartoon Edition, The Hollywood Logo Set, The Company Mascot Edition and The Value Pack. Included on the CD are two complete packs – yours to keep.

The Logo Creator sports a clear and easy-to-use interface with a multiple Undo feature. The rendering engine is extremely quick and will enable you to make countless customisations rapidly and easily. Text can be rotated or put on a curve, or you can apply gradients to it. You can even import your own images and apply the effects just as you can when using the program's predefined objects.

Laughing Bird Software provides a number of tutorials on its Website to get you started, as well as a selection of sample logos to show you how they can be transformed into your new corporate identity.

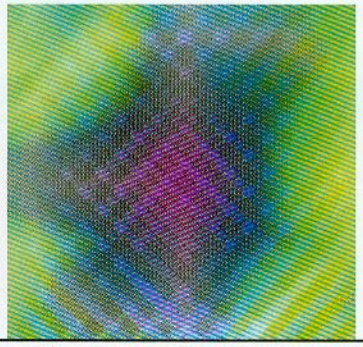
PLUG-INS COLLECTION

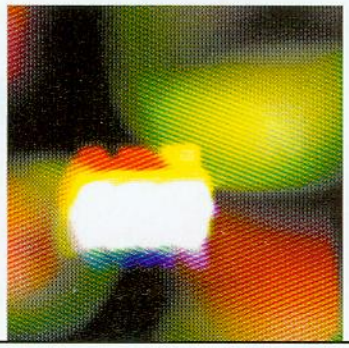
Selection 1 Photoshop & Illustrator Plug-ins

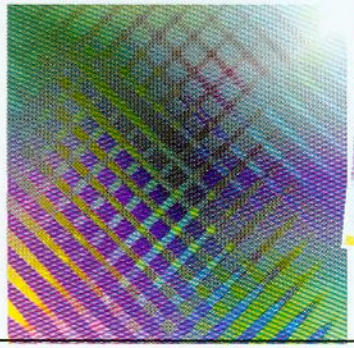
Total Value : £20
PC compatible (All Windows)
Abneil software Ltd [w] www.graphicxtras.com

Selection 1 is a collection of plug-ins based on previously developed plug-ins, with new algorithms for new and unusual effects. The plug-in set comes with gradient/blend colour effects that use the foreground and background colour palette to create weird and wonderful 'flame and patchwork' gradients, colour effects, blur and smear and grain/noise effects and more.

The plug-in set works in RGB mode as well as greyscale, LAB, CMYK, 16-bit colour modes. The plug-ins are for Windows only and work in Photoshop, Paint Shop Pro, Photo-Paint, Illustrator, Bryce and many other graphics applications.







COMPUTER arts projects INTERACTIVE

On the CD (continued)

Your guide to the free extras given away on this issue's cover disc...

FULL PRODUCT!

FlashAmp

FlashAmp is an audio visualisation and lip-sync utility for Macromedia Flash MX and Flash 5, for both Mac and PC. Here's an introduction to using the application. Marmalade Media [w] www.marmalademedia.com.au/

FlashAmp 2 has recently been released with a range of new features and now comes in three editions — Lite, Standard, and Pro. Visit [w] www.marmalademedia.com.au/flashamp/ for details of each edition. The following example shows some of the new features of FlashAmp Pro, which is ideally suited to users wanting to include spectrum visualisations, such as EQ displays in Flash MP3 players. Note that EQ displays are just one of the many possible ways that FlashAmp Pro data can be used within Flash — you could also choose to create vector-based visualisations similar to those used in WinAmp or iTunes.

There are two main steps when using FlashAmp: creating the data files in FlashAmp, and writing ActionScript in your Flash file to respond to the FlashAmp data. The ActionScript required to create an EQ display is very simple.

Part 1: Creating the data with FlashAmp

1 Launch FlashAmp and open the Settings panel. In this example we've chosen to output a spectrum list for 16 bands of frequencies. The resulting list will have stereo values normalised within a range of 0 to 100. The framerate corresponds to the Flash file we're using, and in this case it's set to 15 fps.

2 In the 'Input' panel we've selected a single file to process: 'introloop.mp3'. However, you can also batch-process a folder of audio files.

3 In the Output panel we have chosen the 'Authoring #include' file format to easily use the file in Flash during authoring. You can also choose a 'loadVariables()' file format to load at run-time. Each of these formats which can be created by FlashAmp make it easy to use FlashAmp data within Flash (for more details, see the FlashAmp User Guide at [w] www.marmalademedia.com.au/flashamp). Once you select 'Process' then FlashAmp scans the selected sound file(s) and creates a text file for the audio file(s) using the same file name with a '.txt' extension. Place the file(s) in the same directory as your Flash file.

Part 2: Using FlashAmp data in Flash

At this point you should open the example file fa_Spectrum.fla in Flash (you can use Flash MX or Flash MX 2004). Within the Flash file is a movieClip named 'fa'. Most of the necessary ActionScript code is placed on the instance of this movieClip, which is indicated by the text 'flashAmp control'; the remaining code is located on each 'bar' of the EQ display to respond to the FlashAmp data as the sound plays. The code is commented to indicate how it works and how you can alter it to suit your purposes. Note that the variable 'faFile' is set within the #include file generated by FlashAmp.

The fundamental principle is that FlashAmp Pro generates an array of values for each frame of the sound (one value for each frequency band) that you can use in Flash to easily create an EQ spectrum display like the one in Figure 4, or other spectrum-based animations.

The following code, attached to the instance of the 'fa' movieClip, loads the data file, plays the sound and sets the values for each frame.

```
onClipEvent (load) {
   #include "Introloop.txt"
   _visible = false;
   this.faTrack = new Sound();
   this.faTrack.attachSound(faFile);
   this.faTrack.start();
}
onClipEvent (enterFrame) {
   gFrame = Math.floor((this.faTrack.position/1000)*fps);
   for(i=0; i < numBands; i++) {
            set("_root.gAmpLeft" + i, spectrumLeft[gFrame][i]);
            set("_root.gAmpRight" + i, spectrumRight[gFrame][i]);
   }
}
```

The Flash file also contains 32 duplicate movie clips each responding to the FlashAmp data by changing their '_yscale' properties:

```
onClipEvent (enterFrame) {
   _yscale = _root.gAmpLeft0;
}
```

This is all the code necessary to make the EQ display work. The simplicity of this code means that the only part you need to change to use your own sound file is the '#include' line.

There are examples on the Marmalade Multimedia website that show how to include stop, play, volume and pan controls when using attachSound() ActionScript. See the '16-band stereo eq-type display' example at www.marmalademedia.com.au/flashamp/flashamp_examples.htm.

FlashAmp Pro can also be used to generate amplitude arrays, which represent the relative loudness of the sound and are equivalent to the overall waveform of the sound. These values can be used to achieve lip-sync for character animations as well as VU meters, etc.

A demo version of FlashAmp Pro can also be downloaded from the website. However, this will only output ten array elements per sound file — the full version is required to create complete spectrum and amplitude arrays.

SPECIAL OFFERS!

Readers of Computer Arts Projects can take advantage of a special time-limited offer from Marmalade Multimedia to purchase any version of FlashAmp 2 (Lite, Standard or Pro) at a generously discounted price:

- **FlashAmp Lite US$15 (normally US$45)**
- **FlashAmp Standard US$35 (normally US$65)**
- **FlashAmp Pro US$70 (normally US$120!)**

See [w] www.marmalademedia.com.au/computerarts/ for full details!

Creating an online portfolio

Over the next 16 pages we'll show you how to design and build promotional Web pages, using *Photoshop* and *Dreamweaver* to create a portfolio that all potential clients or employers can view...

Designers often forget how much easier the Internet can make their lives. Although nothing truly beats seeing perfect reproductions of work within a beautifully crafted, print-based portfolio, there can be no denying that the Web is an equally useful promotional device. After all, it's available to pretty much anyone in the industry 24 hours a day.

However, for those dedicated to creating print work, dealing with a Website can be a daunting prospect. Therefore, we're going to lead you through the process of creating a simple portfolio site. Although our example is centred on black-and-white photography, it's just as suitable for displaying graphic design or illustration examples, and the modular nature of the tutorials means you can adapt specific elements for your own needs.

We'll use *Photoshop* for creating and manipulating graphics and *Dreamweaver MX 2004* for creating the Web pages. The latter application now has vastly improved support for CSS-based workflow, enabling you to create cutting-edge, standards-compliant Websites in Design view.

Along with the tutorials, we'll also provide some background information on what makes a good online portfolio, tips for creating a good Website, and common mistakes that people make – and that you should avoid!

Expertise provided by Craig Grannell. Craig can be contacted at:
[e] craig@snubcommunications.com
or you can visit his Website at:
[w] www.snubcommunications.com

Everything needed for you to create this Website is included on the cover CD in the **Software\Tutorials\In The Mag\Online portfolio** folder. This includes the original, layered *Photoshop* file and the exported graphics (within the Assets folder). We've also included the completed *Dreamweaver* site so you can compare your work against ours, as well as a couple of the original high-res photograph scans.

Planning, structure and design

Before you get stuck into constructing your Website, take some time to think about what you want to achieve...

As with the creation of any piece of work, there are a number of stages through which a designer must pass when working on a portfolio Website. Perhaps the most critical of these is the planning stage, during which you need to decide how the site is going to work, what it's going to contain, and also what technology you're going to use to build it.

Designers often assume that the last of those points is unimportant, but in fact the technology you use has a bearing on the final result. The difference between Flash and HTML is vast, not only in terms of flexibility and limitations for the designer, but also in terms of usability for the end user. Unless you're considering using a rather more esoteric format (such as Shockwave), there are effectively three technology choices at your disposal: Flash, a tables-based HTML site and a CSS-based HTML site.

A flash in the pan

The first of these, Macromedia Flash, is primarily a vector-graphics-based animation and interactivity tool. Some designers argue that it provides you with more control over how the finished site looks and also more scope for interaction and visual interest. Flash sites also tend to look identical across platforms, although at the time of writing, the plug-in is far slower on Macs, users of which constitute a large part of your target audience.

It's true that Flash can be a boon to some Website designs, but it rarely works well for a portfolio site – animations and eye candy can distract from portfolio items, and the application often doesn't deal well with bitmaps. (Of course, if you're an interactive designer, Flash may well be suitable, but we're concentrating on creating a portfolio for a photographer or illustrator.)

Therefore, we end up with HTML and a choice of tables and CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) for layout. HTML has its limitations, but doesn't rely on any sort of plug-in, and sites constructed from HTML are fairly easy to update (especially when using a visual editing tool such as *Dreamweaver* or Adobe *GoLive*). Tables used to be the most common method for layout, but they can be a pain to update, aren't accessible, and using CSS provides a designer with the potential for pixel-perfect DTP-style layout control – with everything controlled by one external file.

Technology sort of dictates how the design will work: with HTML (whether using CSS or tables) you need to be thinking in terms of 'boxes'. Even if your designs are organic in nature, the containers for items will be rectangular. You also have to bear in mind that monitor resolutions vary depending on the audience. At the bottom end, you have 800x600 (still used by around a third of those online), but the sort of people you're targeting will most likely have much larger screen resolutions. However, many of them may only be using 1,024x768 on laptops and may not browse at full screen, therefore making an 800-pixel-wide target a good bet.

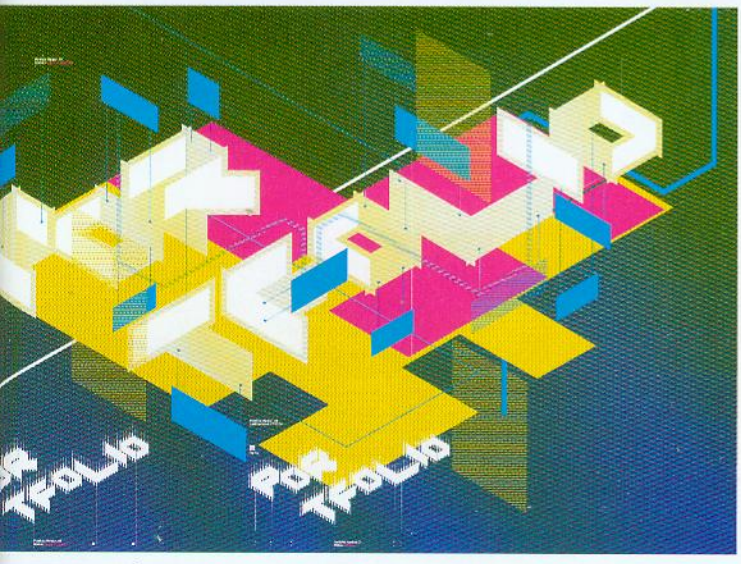
You need to decide whether you're going to have a fixed-width design or a 'liquid' layout, which stretches with the Web browser window. Although liquid layouts are widely preferred, they don't work well when displaying the sort of fixed-size graphics of which a portfolio's likely to be composed. With this in mind, we'll be working with a fixed width layout, but will ensure it looks good enough when the browser window stretches. Working with a fixed layout will also be more comfortable for graphic designers and illustrators, used to working with a canvas of specific dimensions.

Back to basics

The next step should be one away from your Mac or PC. Sketches on paper make for faster progress than fiddling about with, and getting distracted by, software – as is usually the case when working on illustrations.

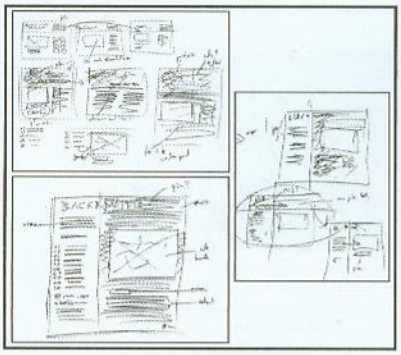
You need to decide how the site is going to be structured and what the content is going to be. Most illustrators and designers have little time to spend on their Websites, so it's a good idea to make it modular and easy to update. Also, avoid adding superfluous elements – get everything down to the bare essentials.

When working on sketches for this feature's Website, we began with a site that had several pages: a news page, gallery, contact details and so on. It soon became obvious that most of

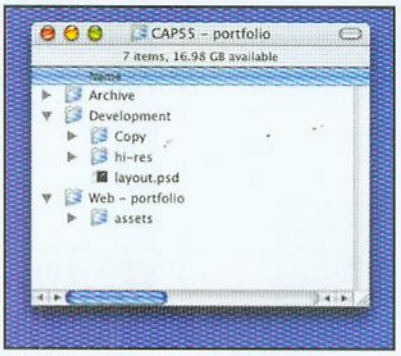


'Liquid' layouts such as [w] www.wired.com stretch with the browser window. Although generally preferable to fixed designs, their lack of fixed element placing means such layouts often aren't suited to portfolio sites.

Fixed layouts (such as on the *Computer Arts* Website) have to be targeted at a specific resolution and don't expand with the browser window, but they work well for portfolios, because the elements within are mostly graphical and of a fixed size.



Although computers are great for consolidating ideas, it's usually best to start by working offline, sketching ideas for navigation, page structure and layouts – just as most illustrators do when tackling a commission.

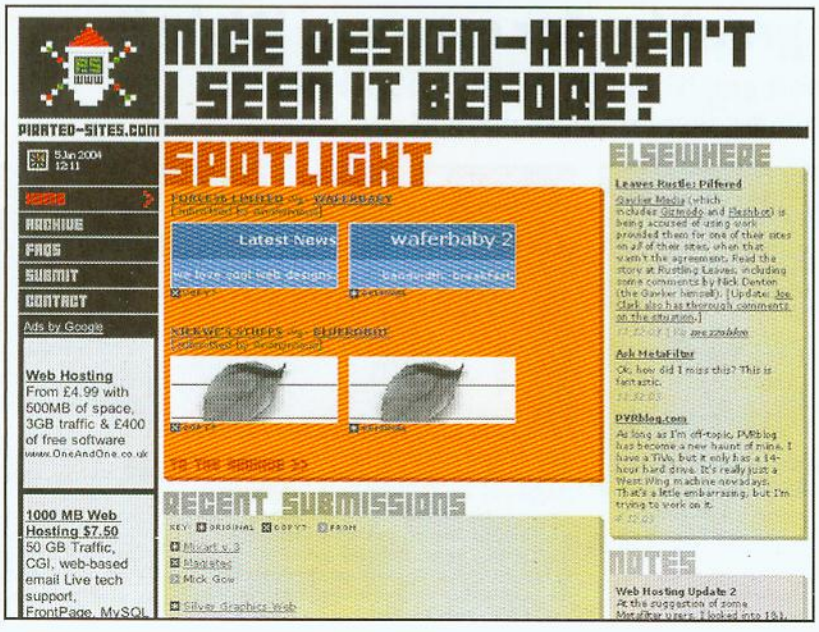


This folder structure isn't set in stone, but we recommend setting up something similar on your hard drive. By doing this you can keep all the files associated with your Website in one place.

these were superfluous: visitors are going to be at the site to see the work and nothing else. Therefore, we decided to hone the site down to a single page, which will contain a brief introduction, some basic contact details and the gallery itself. Using JavaScript, it's actually possible to swap images and text on the fly, thereby avoiding the need to create a new Web page for each portfolio image (or, for that matter, irritating people with pop-up windows). It also means that the portfolio can easily be expanded and reduced by editing a single page. For those paranoid people visiting the Website without JavaScript enabled, we can create a 'fallback' page, enabling them to access each image without using JavaScript.

The sketch was refined a little more and it was then time to start working on the computer. Before opening any software, we created a folder structure on our hard drive, shown in the screenshot above. Although this actual structure is by no means set in stone, we recommend you do something similar when working on your own sites, in order to keep track of development images, copy, high-res images and the Website files.

We start the tutorial by showing you how the layout itself was created from our sketches, and how some of the graphics were exported. The layout document was stored in the Development folder, while exported graphics were placed in 'Web – portfolio/assets'. These files can be found on our cover CD in the Tutorials\Online portfolio folder.



Arrrrr, Jim Lad, there be plenty o' lily-livered pirates sailing the high seas o' the Internet, but Tim Murtaugh's Website at [w] www.pirated-sites.com cuts the scurvy dogs down t' size. Aye.

Copyright laws

You should always seek permission if you want to use material from another site...

Professional designers should already be aware of this, but the point warrants repeating nonetheless: copyright exists on the Web the same as everywhere else. Therefore, don't think you can grab graphics or code from elsewhere and use them on your own Website, unless express permission has been given to do so. In many ways, the same goes for copying (or 'ripping') the actual site layouts. This is quite a common occurrence, as shown by the excellent [w] www.pirated-sites.com (shown below left), and the culprits often don't seem to realise just how fast word travels on the Web.

On the flip-side, designers creating portfolios often tend to get paranoid about people stealing images for use elsewhere. We've seen numerous sites where the portfolio has been ruined by intrusive watermarks or irritating JavaScript 'tricks', such as disabling the right mouse button. Our advice is simple: avoid all such things. Your work is protected by copyright law, and even if some unscrupulous scoundrel downloads your work, a compressed low-res JPEG isn't really of use to anyone.

If you're not convinced and are utterly determined to use some kind of copyright protection, embed it in the document itself, or include a very succinct and relatively small copyright statement on each image. Legally, all you need is '© 2004 Yourname' (replacing 'Yourname' with your name, obviously).

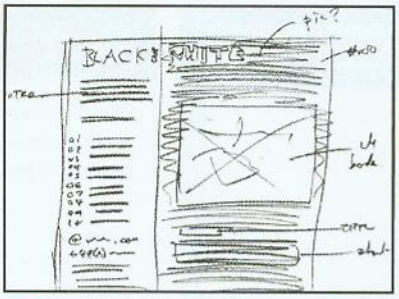
By all means use other portfolio Websites for inspiration, but don't be tempted to steal layouts, images or code.

Part 1: Creating the layout

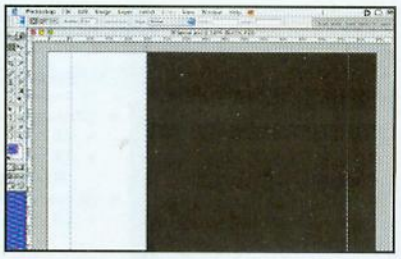
We take the most advanced of our layout sketches and create a *Photoshop* mock-up from which to export graphics...

Measuring internal images

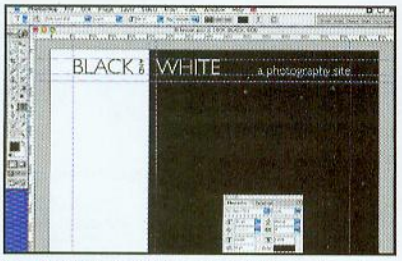
To get fully rectangular borders in *Photoshop*, it's best to place the stroke effect inside the image. Note that CSS borders are placed outside an image, so bear that in mind when measuring your images, particularly when working on a pixel-perfect layout.



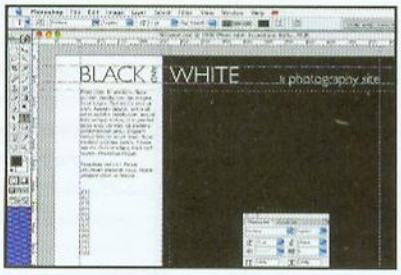
1 Here's the sketch on which we're going to base our Website's layout. The thin column on the left contains an intro and links that will load the images in the larger area on the right. To maximise contrast in each case, the left section will be black text on white, and the right section will have a black background so that the images stand out.



2 Create a new *Photoshop* document and save it as layout.psd in your Development folder. This document should be larger than your smallest target width of 800 pixels, so that you can design around this area. Put guides in place to set the overall layout width (just under 720 pixels – a 'safe' size that takes into account browser toolbars at 800x600). Create the two columns mentioned in the previous step and fill their backgrounds accordingly.

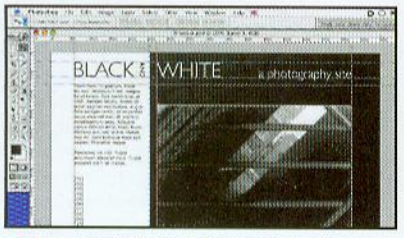


3 Add the site's title and orientation – after all, it never hurts to explicitly say what a site's about. For maximum contrast, use tones that are the opposite of the background colour. Choose a basic sans-serif font (we've used Gill Sans), which looks reasonably stylish but won't distract from the content. Underneath the content in the black column, add a single-pixel white line to separate the main title from the content.



4 In the left-hand column, add some random placeholder text in a font you're likely to use on the final Web page – Verdana, for example. As we said earlier, there are very few Web-safe fonts and this is perhaps the best of them – it's certainly very readable on screen. Add a list for where links to portfolio images will be, and also place contact details in this column.

5 Add a temporary image to the right-hand column and resize it accordingly. Then add a border by using Layer Style>Stroke, a *Photoshop* feature that's handy for rapidly experimenting with border styles (we've gone for a one-pixel white border). Note, however, that borders for the site will actually be done in CSS, not *Photoshop* – this is just for the mock-up. Underneath the image, add a title and brief description.



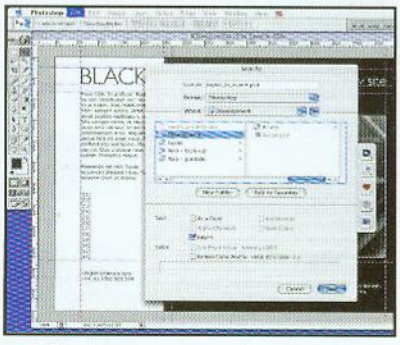
6 The layout works well, but looks too basic and stark. Therefore, open up one of the high-res photographs (grids.jpg, found in Development\hi-res on the CD) and place it over the black column. Change the blend mode to Difference and the layer opacity to 15 per cent. Using a combination of a layer mask and the Gradient tool, soften the effect further, providing the essential balance between a much-needed texture and a subtlety that won't distract from the main image.

Part 2: Exporting graphics for use on a Website

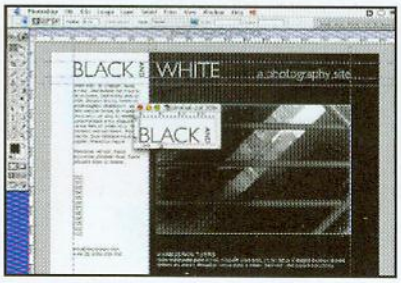
We now show you how to export graphics using *Photoshop's* Save for Web function, avoiding the old-fashioned slice-to-tables method...

Taking measurements

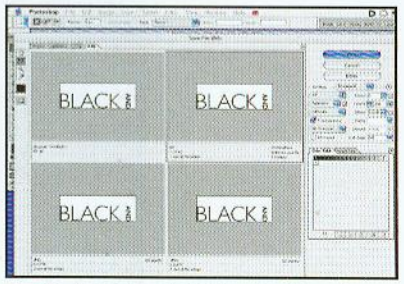
In the old days, Web designers used to chop up *Photoshop* layouts and stitch them back together in a complex table, but we won't be doing this. Instead, we'll be using CSS for pixel-perfect layout tweaking. Therefore, between exporting the graphics and working on the Web page, plenty of measurements need to be noted and recorded, such as column widths, padding and the spacing between elements.



1 Prior to exporting any graphics, it's a good idea to make a copy of the layout document. This is so that you don't overwrite the original layered file with the flattened files you're working on. Therefore, save the document into the Development folder as 'layout_to_export.psd'.



2 Although *Photoshop* has a Slice tool, we've already mentioned that we want to avoid chopping up a layout and then reforming it via a complex table. Therefore, you need to export very specific items. The first graphic to export is the 'BLACK AND' text from the left-hand column. Flatten the layout, use the Marquee tool to select the 'BLACK AND' text and the space above it, then copy it to a new document.



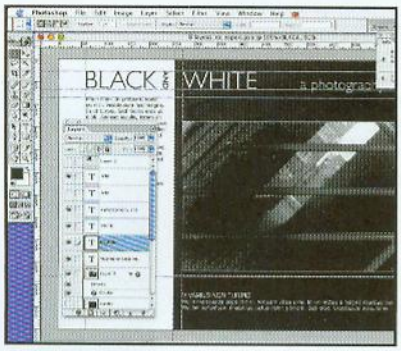
3 Go to File>Save for Web and you'll see the depicted dialog box. Using this dialog, you can compare and contrast various output settings against your original file. When working with single-colour text such as this, the best format for export is GIF – not only does it produce the smallest file size, but it also locks all of the colours, thereby avoiding the lossy compression artefacts often seen in JPEGs. This is saved as mh_black.gif.

For a tidier site

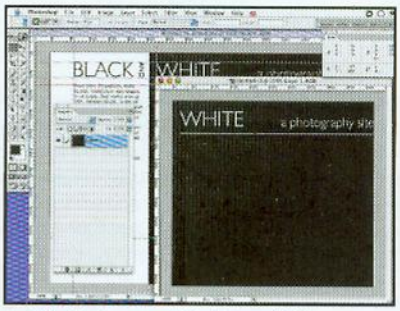
We've ensured that all of our portfolio images have the same dimensions, making for a neater site. This isn't always possible, but you should at least attempt to get all of the widths to be the same when using a fixed-width layout design.

Use RGB

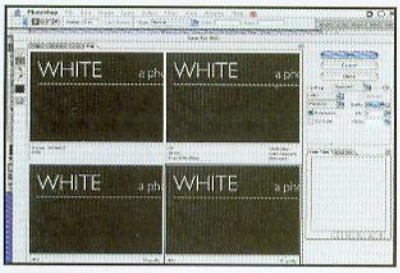
Images for the Web should be in RGB, the colour system used for screen display. Don't try to put CMYK (print-optimised) JPEGs on the Web.



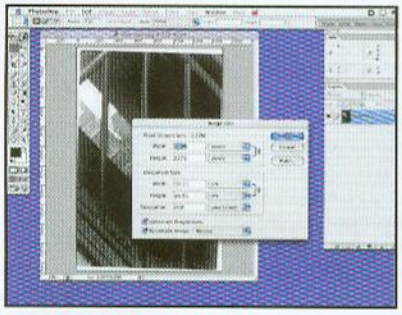
4 The next graphic that needs exporting is the background for the black column. Go to File>Revert or use the History palette to 'unflatten' the layout document. Use the Eyedropper tool to discover where the gradient on the background image totally merges with the background and add a guide at that point.



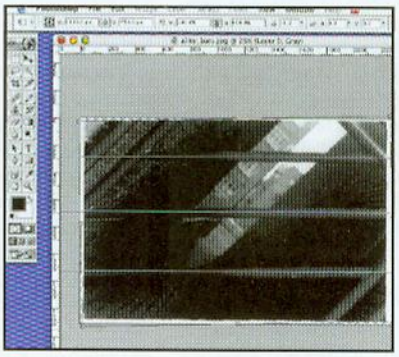
5 Use the Layers palette to turn off all layers that are over the background (in other words, turn off the temporary photograph and its associated caption). Then, as before, select the relevant portion of the layout and copy it to a new document, as shown. Take care with the guides, ensuring you don't cut off the edge of any text; zoom in to make sure this won't happen and tweak guides as necessary.



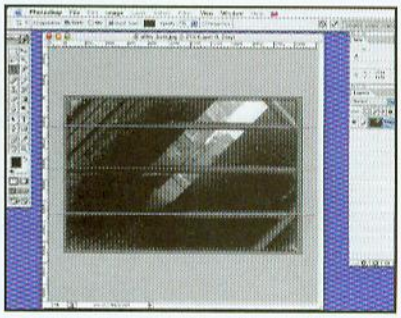
6 Go to File>Save for Web to bring up the depicted dialog box. This image has subtle gradients, but they are in greyscale, which GIF can deal with, and it's certainly a suitable format for the text. However, for such an image, a GIF's file size would be too large, so try using various levels of JPEG compression until the result looks suitable. Because this is a portfolio site, you can perhaps get away with a larger file size than you would on a typical Website. The file name for this image is mh_white.jpg.



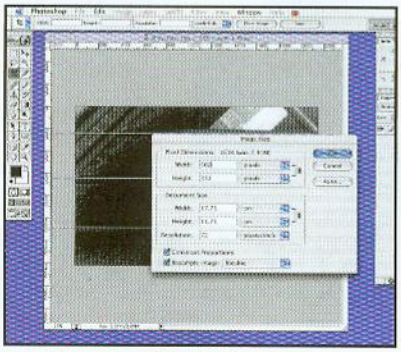
7 The next thing to do is prepare all of the portfolio images. We've included a couple of the originals, which can be found in the Development\hi-res folder in the Online portfolio folder on the cover CD. The alley_bars.jpg document comes direct from a scan of a photograph and is unchanged. As you can see from the screen grab, it's far too big for a Web page, has the wrong resolution and is also a bit wonky.



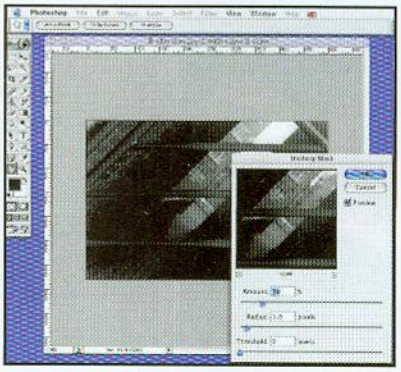
8 Most adjustments to the image should be done at print resolution, because *Photoshop* has more pixels to play with. The image – scanned as portrait – needs to be flipped 90 degrees clockwise. Because the scan wasn't totally straight, guides need to be added and the photograph rotated manually until the bars line up with the guides.



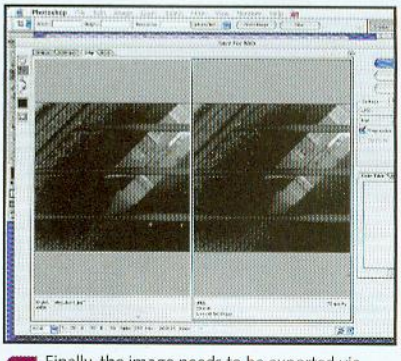
9 Due to the edges of the original photograph being slightly ragged and also because such manual rotation of an image is never totally accurate (resulting in anti-aliased edges), the image needs to be cropped slightly. Use the Crop tool and drag the entire size of the image, then hold Shift+Option (Shift+Alt in Windows) and drag a corner to reduce the selection, maintaining the same aspect ratio.



10 You now need to reduce the image's dimensions and resolution to that required for your Website. Note that when using Image>Image Size and reducing images, *Photoshop* will anti-alias the edges of the image. Therefore, either set the image size to two pixels larger than needed and then use Image>Canvas Size to trim it further, or flatten the image prior to resizing it. The target size is 500x330 pixels at 72 pixels/inch.



11 As anyone familiar with digital imagery will know, reducing an image from something created for print to a small document fit for the Web means a loss of detail. Bring this back by using the Unsharp Mask filter, trying various amounts until the result looks satisfactory. Remember that JPEG compression in the following step will produce artefacts, so don't overdo the sharpening.



12 Finally, the image needs to be exported via File>Save for Web. Bear in mind when creating a portfolio Website that people are choosing to download the images (often one image at a time). Don't compress them too much, otherwise your work will suffer and the viewer will subconsciously link your work with low quality. However, don't force viewers to download files that are too large either – they'll get bored and go elsewhere.

Working with the Web

You'll need to give some thought to Web design software, standards and hosting before launching into the next stage of your site project...

With the layout designed and graphics exported, it's time to start building the Website. One of the first things to consider is which software to use, and such a decision will be down to how comfortable you are with specific working methods. Undoubtedly, the best way to work with sites of a few pages or less is with a text editor (such as *BBEdit* or *HomeSite*). This provides you with the greatest degree of control over the mark-up, scripts and code within your site, but such things tend to be alien to many graphic designers.

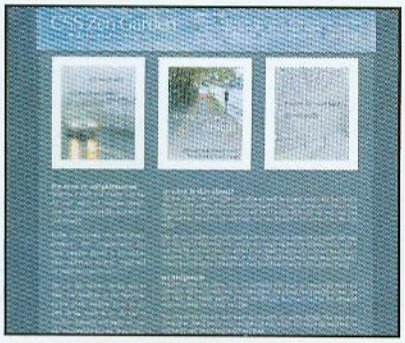
At the other end of the scale are WYSIWYG or 'graphical' Web design applications. Most of these provide a straightforward interface, familiar to designers using the likes of *XPress*, *FreeHand* and *Photoshop*. But, until recently, such Web-design tools had a habit of kicking out appalling, bug-ridden and obsolete code, thereby hindering compatibility. The arrival of the latest versions of *GoLive* and *Dreamweaver* has changed all this, and the latter in particular comes highly recommended for producing cutting-edge Websites that adhere to Web standards.

You've got to have standards

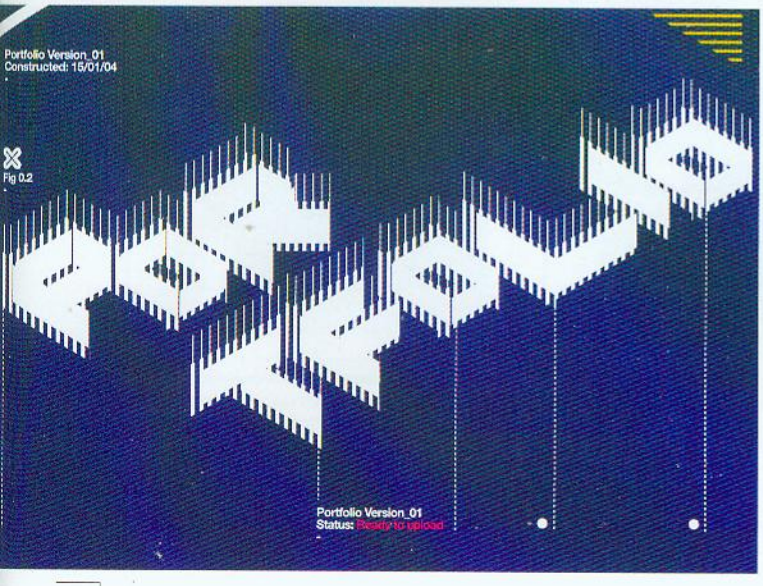
Those advocating Web standards have come in for plenty of flak in recent times and this is due largely to many CSS-based Websites looking like plain vanilla blobs. However, as the likes the Jeff Zeldman continually state, using standards shouldn't affect the quality of the visual design, but should ensure greater compatibility and faster loading times for your sites. Standards-compliant sites also tend to be 'future proof'.

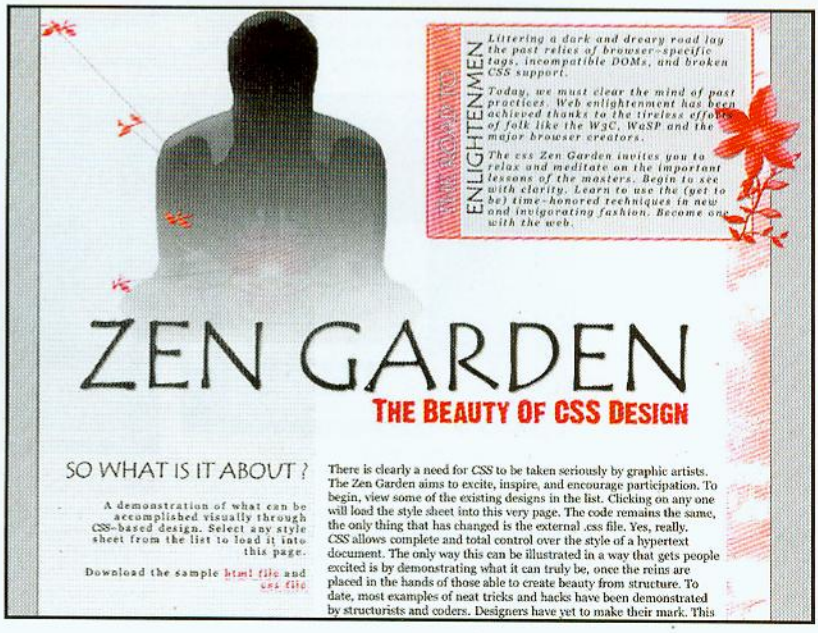
You should also bear in mind that there are other conventions that must be adhered to (see 'Common errors' on the opposite page). One point that needs expanding on is that related to copy. Print-oriented designers often find the lack of 'Web safe' fonts restrictive. The temptation is to render everything as a graphic, but this results in poor usability and readability, not to mention the fact that graphical text is a pain to update. Therefore, you should stick with Web-safe fonts for your body copy. (Note on the previous page how we only exported the large headings and not the rest of the copy.)

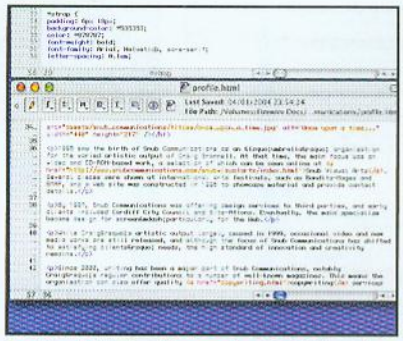
The best available fonts are Verdana, Trebuchet MS and Georgia, although you can also use Arial, Times New Roman, Courier New and – if your sanity has taken a vacation – Comic Sans MS. Mac users running OS X should take note that system-wide anti-aliasing doesn't exist by default on all Windows machines and some earlier versions of the Mac OS. Therefore, take care when sizing body copy and weigh up the pros and cons of whether to use graphics for display copy.



If someone you know is still under the misapprehension that CSS means bland and unappealing designs, point them in the direction of [w] www.csszengarden.com. This site uses identical XHTML (no tables) combined with dozens of CSS files to showcase the very best of standards-compliant Website design.




ENLIGHTENMEN
Littering a dark and dreary road lay the past relics of browser-specific tags, incompatible DOMs, and broken CSS support.
Today, we must clear the mind of past practices. Web enlightenment has been achieved thanks to the tireless efforts of folk like the WaC, WaSP and the major browser creators.
The css Zen Garden invites you to relax and meditate on the important lessons of the masters. Begin to see with clarity. Learn to use the (yet to be) time-honored techniques in new and invigorating fashion. Become one with the web.
ZEN GARDEN
THE BEAUTY OF CSS DESIGN
SO WHAT IS IT ABOUT ?
A demonstration of what can be accomplished visually through CSS-based design. Select any style sheet from the list to load it into this page.
Download the sample html file and css file
There is clearly a need for CSS to be taken seriously by graphic artists. The Zen Garden aims to excite, inspire, and encourage participation. To begin, view some of the existing designs in the list. Clicking on any one will load the style sheet into this very page. The code remains the same, the only thing that has changed is the external .css file. Yes, really. CSS allows complete and total control over the style of a hypertext document. The only way this can be illustrated in a way that gets people excited is by demonstrating what it can truly be, once the reins are placed in the hands of those able to create beauty from structure. To date, most examples of neat tricks and hacks have been demonstrated by structurists and coders. Designers have yet to make their mark. This



Text-based Website editors such as *BBEdit* (above) and *HomeSite* aren't for the faint-hearted. However, improvements to visual editors now enable designers to use a WYSIWYG environment to create cutting-edge, standards-compliant Websites.

Hosting and publishing

We should also briefly mention hosting and publishing your Website. The first thing is that there really is no excuse these days for not having your own domain and domain hosting. Don't skimp on this and use free Web space or register a domain that forwards to free space. Companies such as clara.net offer a domain name and hosting from as little as £30 per year, and many broadband providers will include similar services with your account.

When looking for a domain name, choose a name that is easy to communicate to people. For instance, in the case of Snub Communications, snubcommunications.com is better than snub-communications.com or snubcomms.com. When hyphens and variants of the name come into the equation, things can get complicated. Likewise, try to avoid sub-domains, such as [yourdomain].uk.com and always check to see if your chosen name is already in use but with a different suffix. After all, people often accidentally get these wrong when typing them into a Web browser; if the .com of your .co.uk domain is a competitor, a user might get confused and contact them instead — or, worse, the .com might be a porn site, thereby associating you with that, however unfair that might seem.

With regard to publishing, most Web-design applications have some kind of built-in tool for synchronising local and remote sites, although a dedicated FTP client usually knocks these for six and is worth purchasing. (*Transmit* for OS X is our favourite Mac client; WS_FTP is a dependable one for Windows.) Always ensure you don't merely have an online version of your site — keep a local version too. And remember to take regular back-ups, so you can revert to a previous version of the site if something goes wrong.

Common errors

Watch out for these eight easy-to-make mistakes...

POOR USABILITY
What's obvious to you may not be to others. Keep navigation and access to your work as straightforward as possible and avoid gimmicks. Test the site on others (preferably those who rarely use the Web) before it goes live, taking heed of any criticism.

MISUSE OF CONVENTIONS
The Web has numerous standard conventions, and breaking them causes confusion and results in inferior Websites. One example is underlining text — underlined text online is associated with links, not inactive copy. Another is with navigation, which should typically sit towards the top of a design and in the same place on each page.

INCORRECT EMPHASIS
The aim of a portfolio is to advertise your work. Therefore, your output should be prominent — don't make the mistake of distracting from the work with the site's design, or making portfolio items too small to make out clearly.

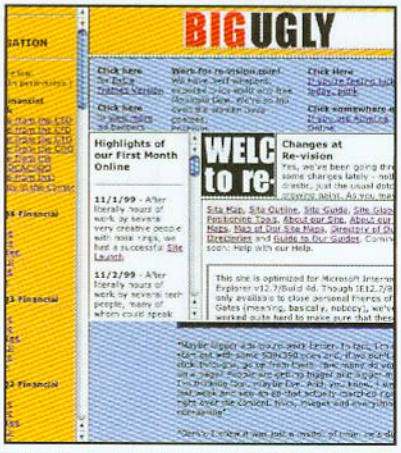
TEXT AS GRAPHICS
You can render display copy as a graphic (so long as you include the 'alt' attribute), but don't do so with body copy or it can't be printed out at a high quality or copied to a text-based application.

LEGACY CODING
If you've dabbled a little with HTML in the past, get yourself up to date at [w] www.w3schools.com or use a modern Web-design application. *Photoshop* moves on, and so do Web standards. For instance, you definitely shouldn't be using font tags in this day and age.

NOT TAKING TIME
Your Website is an advertisement of your ability and professionalism as much as your work is — so don't rush things. A scrappy Website does more harm than good, even if your work is amazing. If in doubt, get a specialist to put together your site.

NOT TESTING THOROUGHLY
Web browsers have individual quirks and bugs, so test your site in as many as possible. A suitable test suite comprises IE6 and 5.5/Windows, IE5/Mac, Mozilla, Opera and Safari. You don't have to make all pages look identical in each — just ensure they work and look good enough.

LACK OF UPDATES
A Website is a living thing and users will assume yours is dead if you don't update it. Each month, add recent work, and avoid placing emphasis on dates — few things look worse than seeing 'last updated' followed by a six-month-old date.



Sure, this is a spoof site, but it still manages to highlight the worst of Web design, including: poor use of space and conventions, appalling usability and incorrect emphasis. Point your browser at [w] www.ecn.bgu.edu/users/gas52r0/Jay/home.html to see it in all its 'glory'.

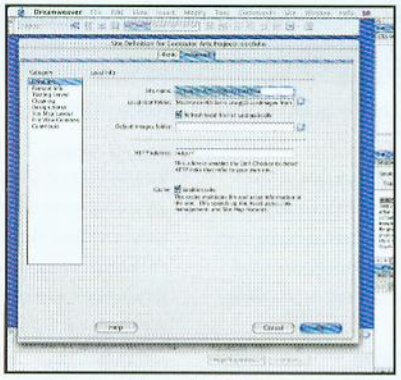
Many hosting companies offer Web hosting and domain names for as little as £30 per year, so there's really no excuse for publishing your site on free Web space with a hard-to-remember URL. See also page 46 this issue.

Part 3: Setting up your site and adding page defaults

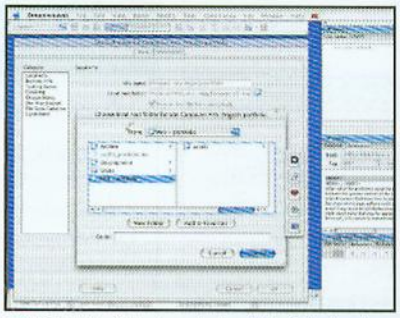
Use *Dreamweaver* to set up the site and some application preferences, followed by the defaults for your Web pages...

Accessibility

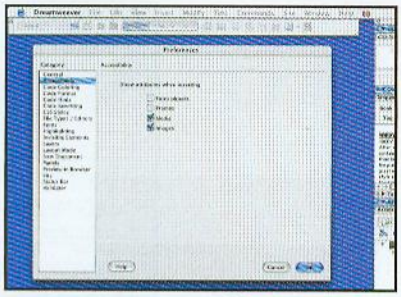
One of the guiding principles of the Web is to make information more readily available to all, and that should include users with disabilities. The World Wide Web Consortium has published Accessibility advice and guidelines which don't take a lot of work to implement, if you keep them in mind right from the start. So when you build your site, remember to include 'alt' text to describe image map links, so that visually impaired visitors who may be relying on screen reader software can make sense of them. Ensure that body text can be resized, so that viewers can enlarge it if they need to. When you create hypertext links, try to use text that makes sense, never just 'click here'. And structure your site so that it is possible to tab through structural elements, not just click on them, so that people who find it difficult to use a mouse can still get around it. For more advice, visit the Web Accessibility Initiative site at [w] www.w3.org/WAI/



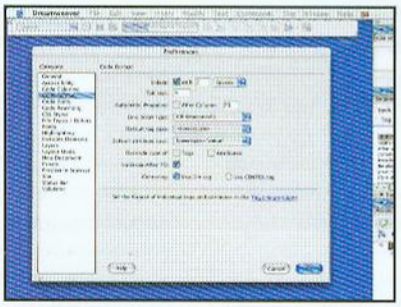
1 Prior to working on the Web pages, you need to set up your site. Go to Site>Manage Sites and in the resulting dialog box, go to New>Site. Click on the Advanced tab and in the Site name field, input your site's name (we've used 'Computer Arts Projects portfolio').



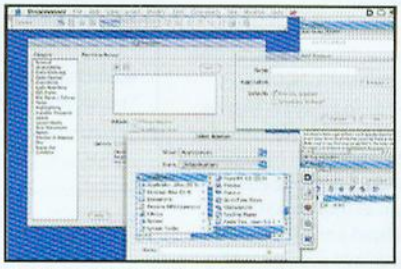
2 Click the folder icon to the right of the Local root folder field and navigate to the Web folder within the structure created earlier. Select it and click Choose (OK in Windows). Take care not to choose the assets folder! At this point, you can also set up information for your hosting space, by going to Remote Info, selecting FTP from the drop-down menu, and then inserting the relevant information about your Web space. Click OK and Done to finish.



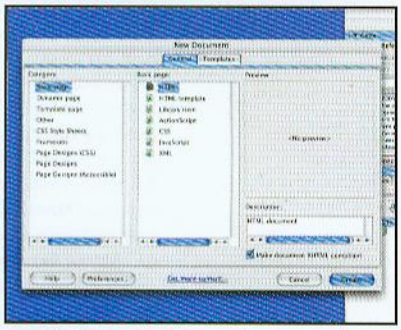
3 *Dreamweaver* is a powerful and complex tool, so you need to ensure it's set up correctly. By and large, its default settings are pretty good, but there are some that need changing. Cmnd+U (Ctrl+U in Windows) brings up *Dreamweaver's* preferences. By default, *Dreamweaver's* accessibility settings are turned off, so access that category and check the Images and Media boxes. The former makes *Dreamweaver* prompt you for 'alt' text when you add an image.



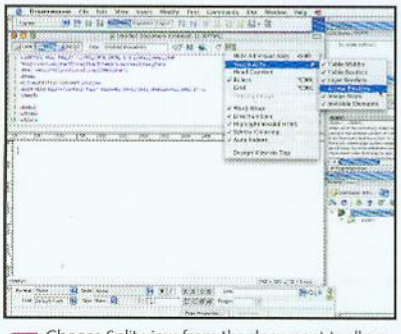
4 Under General preferences, ensure the correct spelling dictionary is selected (there are various options for English, for instance) and then go to the Code Format category. The most important thing here is Automatic Wrapping, which should be turned off. This ensures *Dreamweaver* doesn't place hard breaks in your code, which can sometimes lead to layout errors and also make Web page content trickier to update.



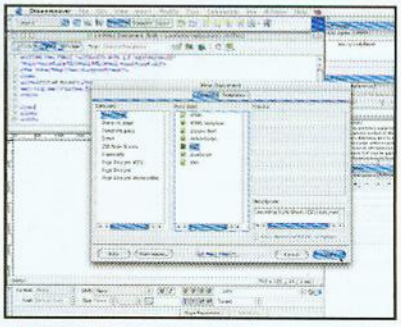
5 Go to Preview in Browser and add your installed browsers to the list. For each one, click on the plus sign to bring up the Add Browser dialog, then click Browse and select the relevant software on your hard disk. Note that you can specify primary and secondary browsers, which are afforded keyboard shortcuts. Do *not* just rely on *Dreamweaver's* Design view or, for that matter, *Internet Explorer*. As we've said elsewhere, you need to test your site in a range of browsers, and preferably on both Windows *and* Macs.



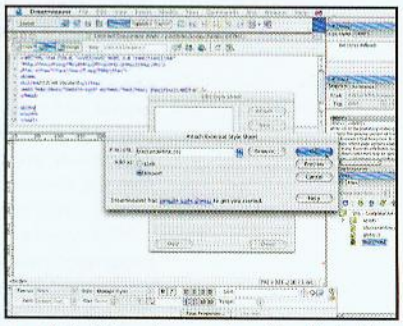
6 To set document view preferences, you have to open a new document. Go to File>New to bring up the New Document dialog. Select Basic page from the category list and then HTML from the Basic page list. Ensure that 'Make document XHTML compatible' is selected (XHML is the most recent mark-up standard). Click Create and *Dreamweaver* will open a new document for you.



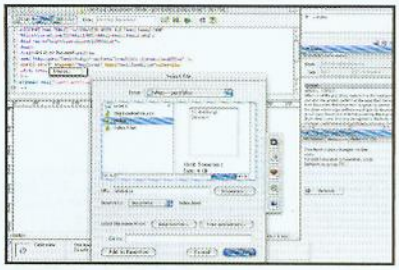
7 Choose Split view from the document toolbar. *Dreamweaver* purists sometimes balk at this view, but we reckon it's a Godsend: it enables you to work in Design view and check whether code has been applied correctly – something that's essential when positioning divs or working with templates. Click the View Options button and turn everything on in Visual Aids and at the foot of the menu, as shown. This will ensure that code displays in a readable manner and that Design view aids are on.



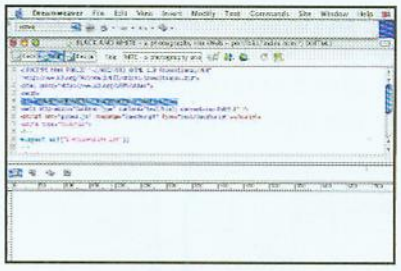
8 Go to File>Save As and *Dreamweaver* should automatically navigate to the root of your Website. Save the file as index.html, taking care to alter the default *Dreamweaver* suffix (.htm). You should see your document appear in the Files panel (accessible via the Windows menu, if the panel is not active). Create two more files by going to File>New: a CSS file and a JavaScript document. Save them in the site root as blackandwhite.css and global.js, respectively.



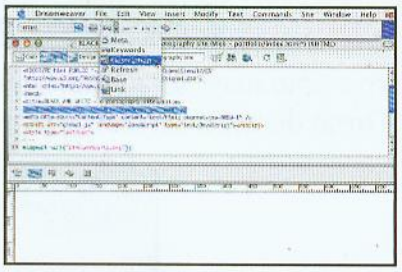
9 Both of these documents must be attached to the Web page. To attach the CSS file, bring the HTML file to the front and select Manage Styles from the Properties Inspector's Style drop-down menu. In the resulting dialog box, click Attach. Browse to and select your file, select the Import radio button and click OK. (Using Import to attach the CSS file hides the CSS from obsolete browsers, ensuring your Web page is accessible to all Internet-enabled devices.)



10 It's best to attach JavaScript by using the Code section of Split view. Click after the first meta tag and hit Enter. Select the HTML set on the Insert bar and click the Script button. Click OK and mark-up will be added to the document. Click after 'script' in the opening tag of this mark-up and hit space to bring up the Code Hints menu. Choose 'src', then use Browse to find your JavaScript document and click Choose (OK in Windows) to attach it.



11 Go to View>Head Content and a small icon bar will appear between Design and Code view. This provides easy access to invisible content in the head of your Web page. Click on the Title icon and add a document title (such as 'BLACK AND WHITE – a photography site'). If you don't amend this title, your document will be called Untitled Document when opened in a Web browser – very unprofessional.



12 Next, add meta tags to assist search engines in finding and filing the site. This is done via the Head icon drop-down menu within the Insert bar's HTML selection. Simply choose Keywords and Description from the menu and input the relevant content. For the former, choose approximately 30 non-generic keywords or short phrases; for the latter, provide a very succinct description of your Website.

Part 4: Working with basic page structure

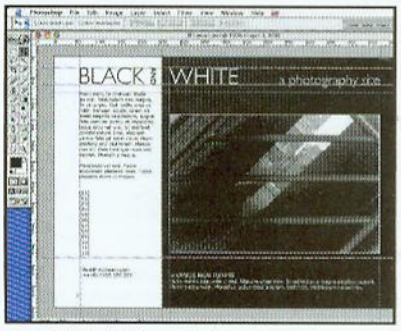
You can now start working with divs and CSS in order to create the basic structure of the Web page...

IDs and classes

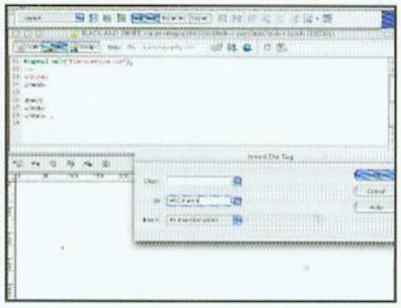
When working with CSS, you typically work with IDs and classes. The difference between these is that IDs can be applied to only one element, but can be targeted by scripts, while classes can be applied to multiple Web-page elements. Therefore, for major structural elements (the navigation area, and so on), we tend to use IDs, since there is only one of these on a page. For repeated elements, it's common to use classes. Note that you can also create CSS definitions for any HTML element.

Naming conventions

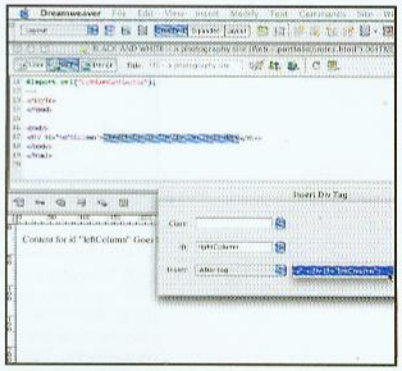
Throughout this tutorial we'll be using the following naming convention for things like CSS IDs and editable regions: wordWord. This is simple to remember and read, and ensures we avoid 'dangerous' characters such as spaces and underscores.



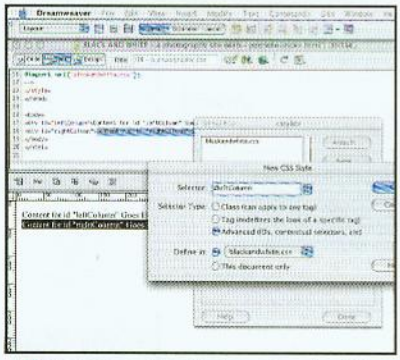
1 Prior to dealing with the Web page layout's structure, you need to revisit the original mock-up, in order to see what's required. Essentially, there are two columns, but these should sit in the centre of the screen. There are various ways of achieving this, but what we're going to do here is create two columns that stretch to the width of the browser window and then place our fixed content within them.



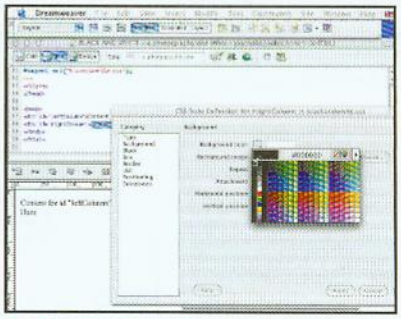
2 *Dreamweaver's* CSS workflow is logical: you first use the Insert Div Tag from the Layout selection of the Insert bar to add HTML divs to the Web page, and you then style them using the CSS Style Definition dialog. First, then, click somewhere in Design view, then click the aforementioned Insert Div Tag button. In ID type 'leftColumn' and click OK. You'll see the div added to Code view; it's also populated with dummy content, so you can tell where it is in Design view.



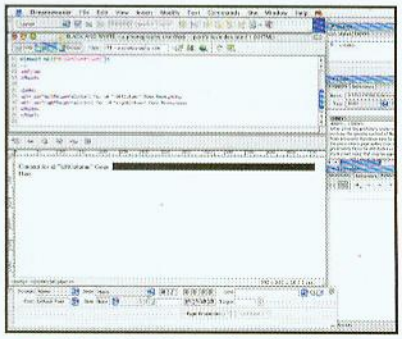
3 Add another div tag in the same way for the right-hand column. This time in the Insert Div Tag dialog, type rightColumn for the ID. Because we want this to come after the leftColumn div in our structure we choose 'After Tag' and from the Insert field. Click OK and you'll see the div placed in the correct position.



4 You now need to style these divs using CSS. Go to Style>Manage Styles in the Properties Inspector, then click on New. In the New CSS Style dialog, choose Advanced as the Selector Type, then type #leftColumn in the Selector field. (For CSS rules, IDs must be preceded by a hash sign and classes by a period.) Click OK and the CSS Style Definition dialog will appear.



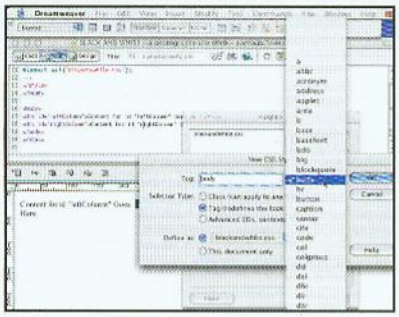
5 Here, we set property values for our chosen div. In Background, choose white (#FFFFFF) for Background colour (you can use the pop-up colour picker). In Box, set Width to 31 per cent and Float to Left. Click Apply and OK. Follow the same procedure for the second column, but instead type #rightColumn in the Selector field. Other differences for this column are the background colour, which should be black (#000000), and the width, which should be 69 per cent.



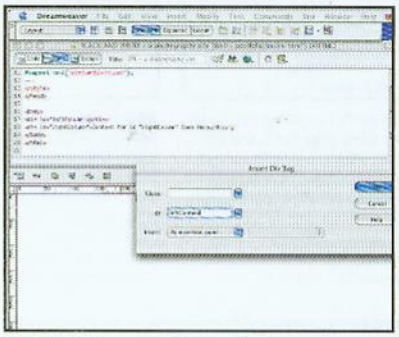
6 Click Apply and OK and you should see the columns set up in Design view. As you can see in the above image, there are now two columns, both of which have been floated left, therefore placing them side-by-side. Both have taken on the property values defined in the previous step. The benefits of this system should be obvious: all these settings can be changed (site wide) just by editing a single CSS file.

Part 5: Continuing page structure

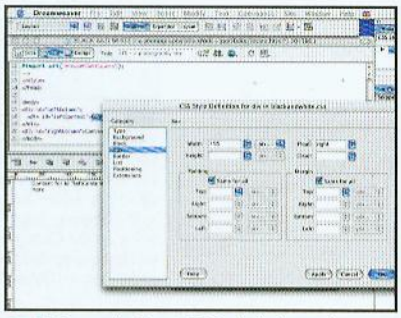
You now need to add two more divs to complete the page structure. These divs will be containers for the Web-page content...



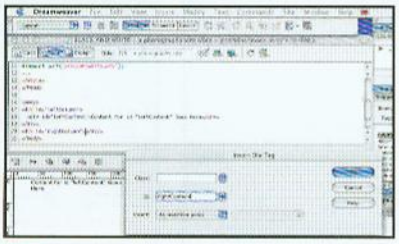
1 Already, there are things that need amending – the columns don't sit flush to the edge of the Web page. Therefore, you need to set property values for the body tag. Open up the New CSS Style dialog again and choose Tag as the Selector Type. Choose body from the drop-down menu and click OK. In Background, set Background colour to black (#000000). In Font, set Font to 'Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif' and Size to 11 pixels. Finally, in Box, set Padding and Margin to 0.



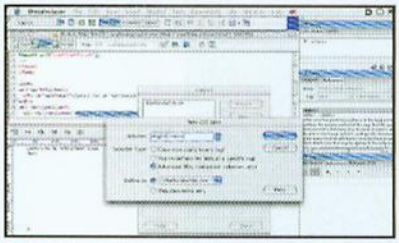
2 Select the content in the leftColumn div and delete it, taking care not to delete the div itself (check in Code view). Then insert another div as previously, this time with an ID of leftContent. Because you've just deleted content from the leftColumn div, the cursor is in the correct position, so leave Insert as 'At insertion point'. Click OK to continue. Look at Code view: the new div should be nested within the leftColumn div.



3 Bring up the New CSS Style dialog and choose Advanced as the selector type. Type #leftContent into the Selector field, taking care not to omit the hash sign. Click OK. In the CSS Style Definition dialog, go to Background and set Background colour to white (#FFFFFF). Then go to Box and set Width to 195 pixels (a measurement taken from the mock-up). Set Float to right, because you want the content of this column to sit at the right of its container.



4 Now add a div for the content in the right-hand column. Again, select the content in rightColumn and delete it (using Code view to help, because the content is black on a black background). This time in the Insert Div Tag dialog, type rightContent for your ID name.



5 Once again, bring up the New CSS Style dialog and choose Advanced for the selector type. Type #rightContent into the Selector field and click OK. In the CSS Style Definitions dialog go to Box and set Width to 521 pixels – gain, a measurement taken from the mock-up.

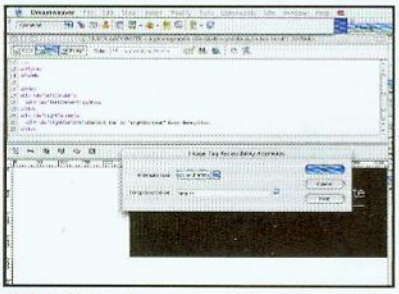
6 Under Padding, uncheck 'Same for all' and set the values to 135 pixels, 0, 50 pixels and 19 pixels for Top, Right, Bottom and Left respectively. In Background, set Background colour to black (#000000). For Background image, Browse to and choose mh_white.jpg (from the assets folder), set Repeat to no-repeat and Horizontal position and Vertical position to left and top respectively. Note that when you return to Design view, your columns might sit one under the other on a small monitor.

Part 6: Adding content to the left column

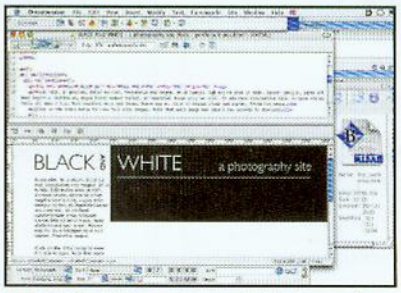
Use the left-hand column for introductory copy, the portfolio links and contact details...

Working with margins

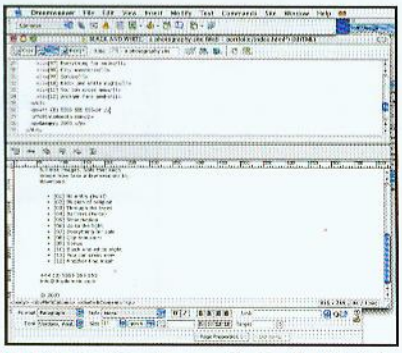
A good rule of thumb when working with page element margins is to set the top margin to 0 and control spacing using the bottom margin.



1 In Design view, select and delete the content from the leftContent div. Choose the Common selection from the Insert bar drop-down menu and click the Image icon. Choose Image from the drop-down menu. Navigate to mh_black.jpg in the assets folder and click Choose (OK in Windows). In the subsequent dialog box, type some Alternate (alt) text for people using alternate browsers or screen-reader software. Click OK and the image will be added to the Web page.



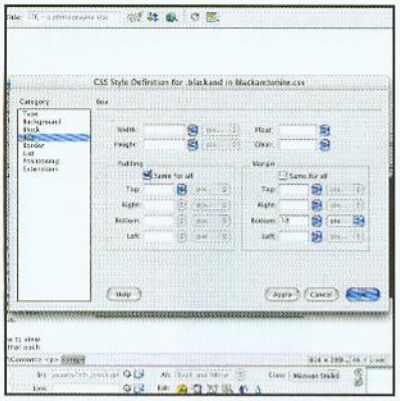
2 Hit the right arrow to deselect the image, then hit Enter. *Dreamweaver* automatically creates a blank paragraph. Use this to add some body copy to the left-hand column, separating paragraphs by hitting Enter. Text formatting can be altered by using the Format menu in the Properties Inspector. Note that if you type or paste non-standard characters into Design view (such as smart quotes from *Word*), *Dreamweaver* automatically converts them into HTML equivalents.



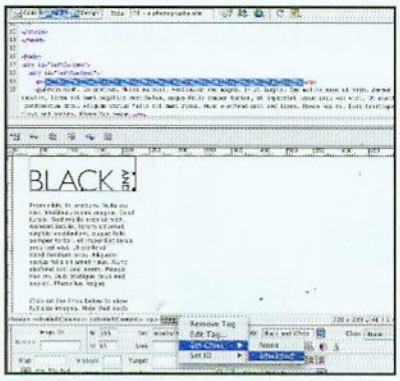
3 Use the Properties Inspector to add a list of all the portfolio images. These will later be turned into links and the list itself will be styled to remove the bullet points and margins. Do *not* just use a normal paragraph and carriage returns to create this list, because this results in poor, non-semantic mark-up and reduces formatting flexibility later on.

How margins work

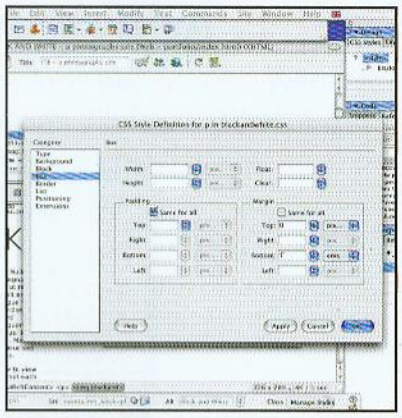
By default in CSS, margins collapse rather than accumulate, so the bottom margin of 1em on paragraphs and the 2em margin at the top of the list don't combine to 3em – the final margin is simply the greater of the two: 2em.



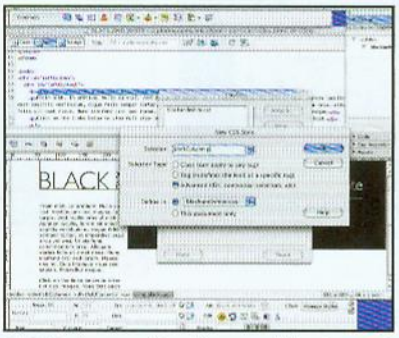
4 You should now start using CSS to set very specific spacing between the page elements. The first of these will be to set the spacing underneath the image at the top of the left-hand column. Open the New CSS Style dialog and choose Class as the selector type. Type .blackand (including the period) into the Name field. Click OK. In Box, deselect 'Same for all' under Margin and set Bottom to 18 pixels.



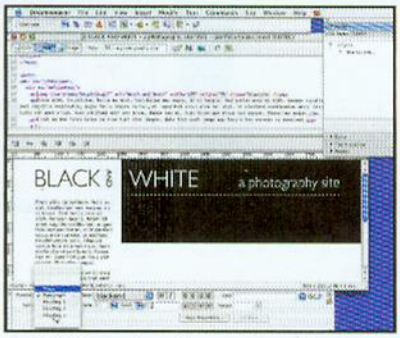
5 Adding a class to an inline element can be done in several ways. First, select the target object in Design view (in this case, the 'BLACK AND' image). Then do one of the following: select the relevant class from the Properties Inspector's Class menu; or double-click the relevant class in the CSS Styles panel; or go to Text>CSS Styles and choose the relevant class; or right-click the relevant tag in the status bar and go to Set Class>[relevant class] (as depicted).



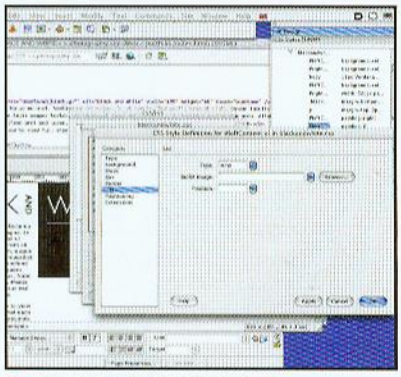
6 Block elements, such as paragraphs, always have default margins around them and this can vary from browser to browser, so we need to set specific margins. In the New CSS Styles dialog, choose Tag as the selector type and type 'p' in the Tag field. In the CSS Style Definition dialog, go to Box and deselect 'Same for all' under Margin. Set Top to 0 and Bottom to 1ems.



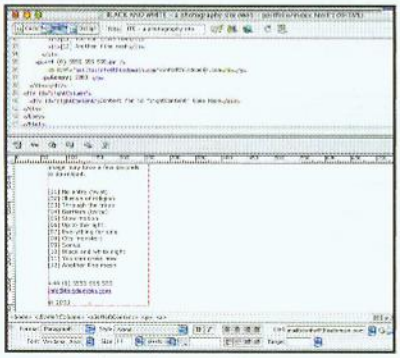
7 If using a small monitor, expand the document window until the columns sit side by side. Note how the text in the left-hand column hugs the dividing line. You don't want this to happen, but also don't want to set padding on all paragraphs, so instead use a contextual selector. In the New CSS Style, set Selector Type to Advanced and type #leftColumn p in the Selector field. (This effectively means 'all paragraphs within the leftColumn div'.)



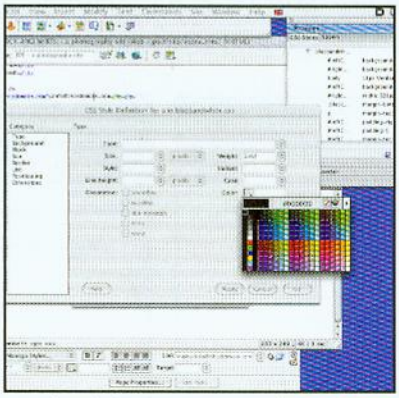
8 Click OK and you'll once again see the CSS Style Definition dialog box. In Box, uncheck 'Same for all' under Padding and then set Right to 10 pixels. Click Apply, and paragraphs within the leftColumn div acquire padding to the right. At this point, the 'BLACK AND' image is within a paragraph, so you should select it, hit the left arrow and then set Format to None in the Properties Inspector – the image should have no formatting.



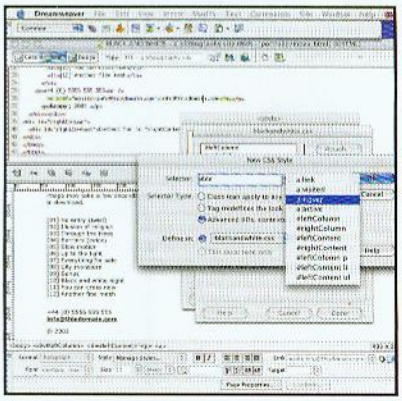
9 Next, style the list. This is done by creating the contextual selectors #leftContent ul and #leftContent li. For the latter, set all padding to 0. For the former, set top and bottom margins to 2ems and left margin and left padding to 0. Under List, set Type to none. This removes the standard bullet from list items.



10 Now change the email address into a live link. This is done by selecting the link and typing into the Link field 'mailto:info@thisdomain.com' (replacing info@thisdomain.com with your email address). Note that email addresses online are often harvested by spammers. You can combat this by going to http://hiveware.com/enkoder_form.php and using Enkoder. The results can be pasted into your Web page in place of the entire link (using Code view).



11 If you look at Design view, you'll notice the email link has the standard blue colour. Like every other page element, this can be changed. In the New CSS Style dialog, choose Tag for the selector type and type the letter 'a' into the Tag field (<a> is the HTML anchor tag). Click OK and, under Type, set Weight to bold and Colour to black (#000000).

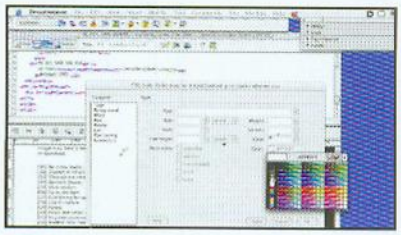


12 Each of the four link states – link, visited, hover and active – can be amended, creating rollover effects. In the New CSS Style dialog, choose Advanced for the selector type and then a:hover from the Selector drop-down menu. In the CSS Style Definition dialog, set Colour to #555555. Don't leave off the hash sign – *Dreamweaver* will still show the hover colour, but many browsers won't.

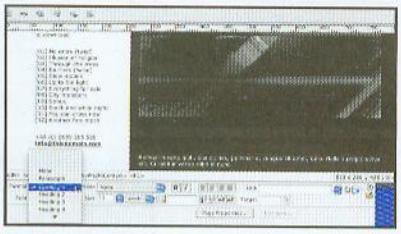
Part 7: Adding content to the right-hand column

You now need to add content to the black area of the page. Introduce the portfolio image, title and caption...

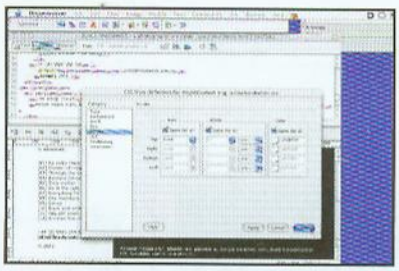
1 Select the content in the rightContent div and delete it, again taking care not to delete the div itself (use Code view to assist). Use the Image icon to add the first portfolio image, from the assets folder: 1_alley_bars.jpg. Add some alt text in the Image Tag Accessibility Attributes dialog (something like 'portfolio image'). Click OK. Note that the image should be correctly positioned thanks to the padding settings defined earlier.



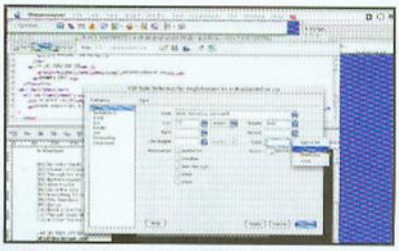
2 You now need to define the style for paragraphs in the rightContent div. This is done via the usual means – a contextual selector. In the New CSS Style dialog, the selector type should be Advanced and called '#rightContent p'. The only thing to define in the CSS Style Definition dialog is the Colour, which should be white (#FFFFFF). The reason for defining this now is that we'd otherwise be working with black text on a black background.



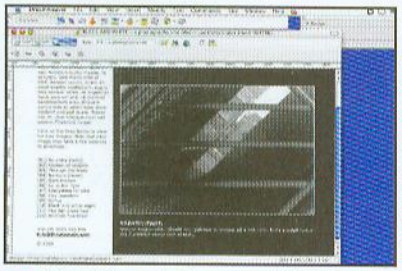
3 Select the image in the rightContent div, hit the right arrow and then Enter. Type a title for the image, hit Enter and then type a caption for it. Some of these elements now need reformatting. Select the image, hit the left arrow and choose None from the Properties Inspector's Format menu. Select the title (you only have to click inside it) and choose Heading 1 from the Format menu. The title will 'vanish' because it's currently black on a black background.



4 Now style the image. This is done via another contextual selector. In the New CSS Style dialog, choose Advanced for the selector type and type #rightContent img into the Selector field. In the Border category leave 'Same for all' checked in all cases and set Style to solid, Width to 1 pixel and Colour to white (#FFFFFF). When you click OK and Done you should see a thin white border on the portfolio image.



5 Next, open the New CSS Style dialog and add another contextual selector to our CSS file, to define the title, formatted as Heading 1. Choose Advanced for Selector Type and type into the Selector field: #rightContent h1. In the CSS Style Definition dialog, choose 'Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif' for Font, 12 pixels for Size, bold for Weight, white (#FFFFFF) for Colour and uppercase for Case. Under Box, deselect Same for all under Margin and set Bottom to 0 pixels.



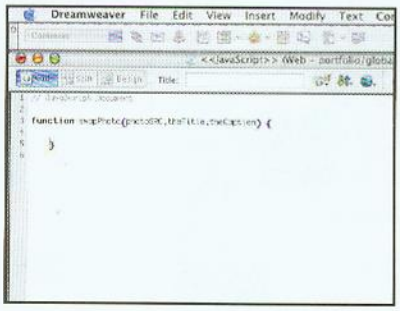
6 Here is the result. The paragraph hugs the bottom of the title and the latter is rendered in uppercase regardless of what's written inside the tag. You could have achieved the same effect by formatting everything as a paragraph, typing the title in uppercase and setting a carriage return between the title and caption. However, our use of semantic mark-up is more flexible and means that all this formatting can be changed easily in future.

Part 8: Making the page dynamic

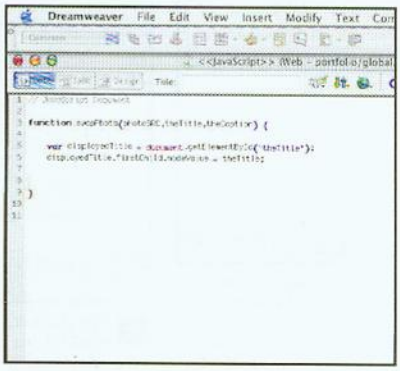
Now use some JavaScript to make your Web page dynamic, so the list links can be used to change the portfolio image and associated title and caption...

Cut and paste

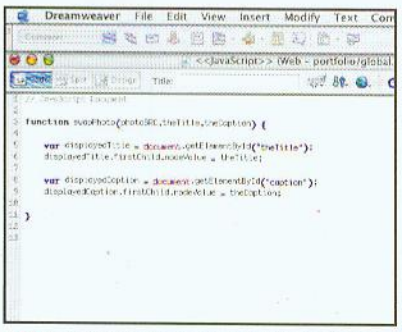
If you don't fancy working through the JavaScript, just cut and paste it from the example site on this month's cover CD.



1 We'll now show you how to write a JavaScript function that will make it possible for you to click links on your Web page to swap the main portfolio image, title and caption. This means your portfolio can be a single page, rather than a number of Web pages, which would take longer to update. Open global.js and type the following: **function swapPhoto(photoSRC,theTitle,theCaption) {}**



2 Next, between the curly quotes, type the following, remembering to copy cases identically in each case: **var displayedTitle = document.getElementById("theTitle"); displayedTitle.firstChild.nodeValue = theTitle;**

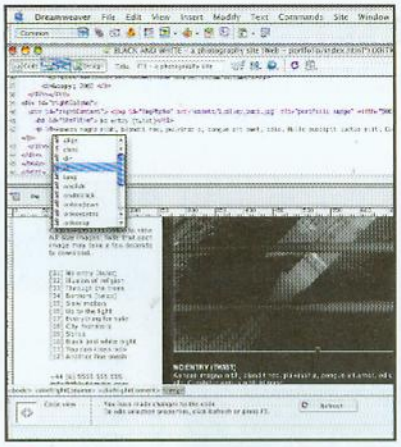


3 The following line of code is added next (note that to make formatting tidier, it's a good idea to add a carriage return after each semi-colon): **var displayedCaption = document.getElementById("caption"); displayedCaption.firstChild.nodeValue = theCaption;**

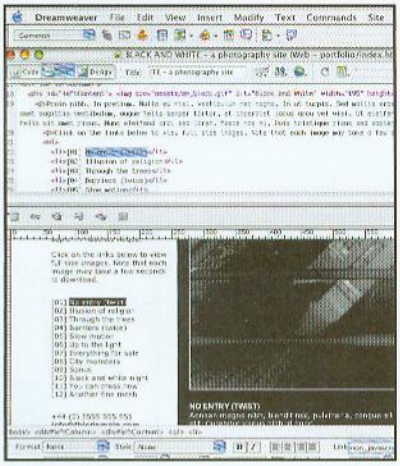
Save often

Save regularly when working on Web pages and remember you may need to save all of the component parts before previewing successfully. You can do this in *Dreamweaver* by going to File>Save All.

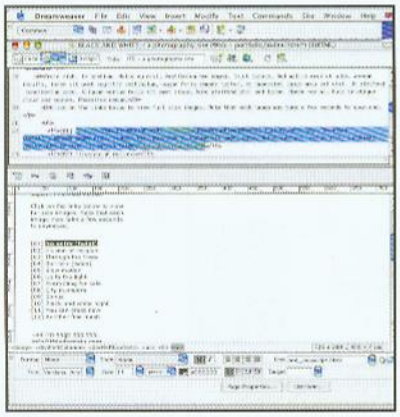
4 Finally, you need to add the following line of code to complete the script: **document.images.imgPhoto.src = "assets/" + photoSRC;** Note that the path within quotes is the location of your images, so if you've placed these in a folder other than 'assets', you'll need to edit that line accordingly. Should you want to, you can add a JavaScript comment prior to the function, in order to state what it's for. A single-line comment is started with two forward slashes, so a typical comment might read: // image swapper.



5 Now go back to your Web page. First, provide each of the elements to be swapped with the unique IDs from the script (theTitle from step 2, Caption from step 3 and imgPhoto from step 4). The simplest way to do this is in Code view – just type id within the tag and add the relevant value between the quotes (imgPhoto for the image, theTitle for the title, and caption for the caption).

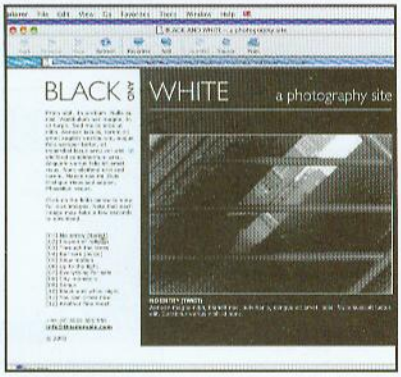


6 Scroll Design view until you can see the list of portfolio items. Select the relevant portion of the first one that you want to turn into a link. Type non_javascript.html into the Link field in the Properties Inspector. Note how the link automatically takes on the CSS link property values defined earlier.



7 Open the Behaviours panel. If you only see onMouseOver, click the plus sign and go to Show Events For>4.0 and Later Browsers. Select onClick and type the following: **onclick="javascript:swapPhoto('1_alley_bars.jpg', 'Title of work','Caption for work'); return false;"**

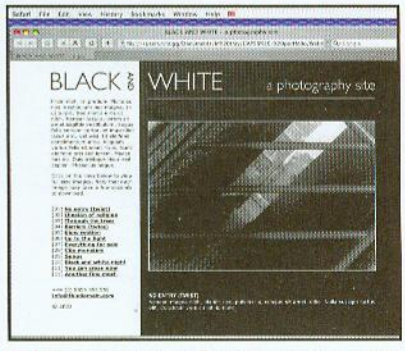
8 The next two steps will create text for the status bar when the user hovers over the portfolio link (otherwise the JavaScript above will be displayed). In onMouseOver type: **window.status='View image'; return true;"** Note that the words View image should be surrounded by single quotes – surrounding it with double quotes breaks the script.



9 The previous step creates the status bar text, but it remains on even when the cursor is moved, so we need to add another behaviour for when the cursor is removed from the link. To do this, in onmouseout type: **window.status='';** (Again, this uses two single quotes – that is not a double quote after the equals sign.) Depicted is the result, as shown in a browser that supports status bar text.

10 Following this procedure for each of the links within the portfolio would be extremely tedious. What you can do instead is copy and paste the mark-up created for this first link around the others in the list. When doing so, remember in each case to include an end tag () to close the link.

11 In Design view, the page is looking pretty good, although it's apparent that there's one difference from the mock-up: the title and caption are too close to the portfolio image. Rather than going back into the CSS Style Definition dialog box, select the #rightContent img selector from the CSS Styles dialog and use the Tag inspector to add a setting of 40 pixels to margin-bottom (found in the Box section).



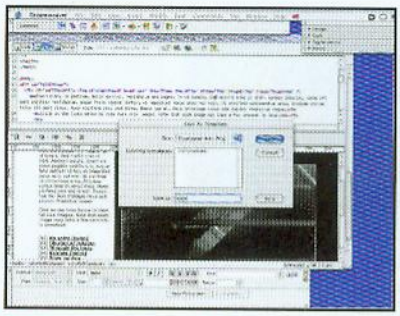
12 The previous step will have reopened your CSS file if it was shut. Go to File>Save All to ensure all files are bang up-to-date and then test your index.html file in a Web browser. For all practical purposes, this page is now fit to use (although it obviously still needs testing in several other browsers). However, we're not done yet. We still need to work on an alternate version of the page for paranoid Web users who've disabled JavaScript.

Part 9: Creating a template and a 'fallback' Web page

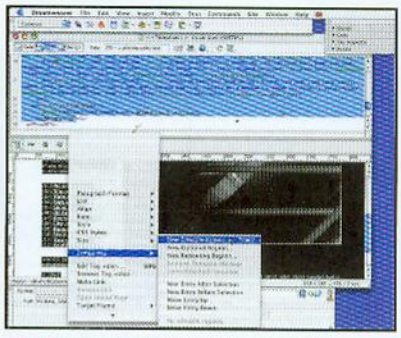
Use *Dreamweaver's* built-in template technology to create a template, and then use that to create a new index.html page and a non-JavaScript version of our page...

Opening new windows

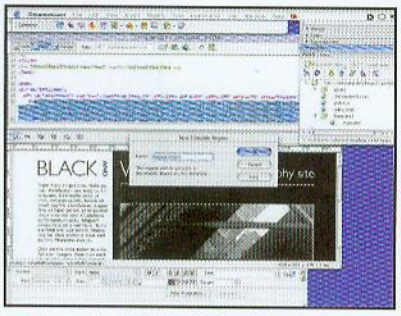
Be wary of targeting blank windows, as outlined in step 7 on this page. This tends to annoy a lot of Web users and the content within won't be recorded in the same browser history as the main Web page.



1 Create a non-JavaScript 'fallback' of your Web page, but keep the same design. The simplest method of doing so is to knock up a quick *Dreamweaver* template. Although templates can rapidly become complex in *Dreamweaver*, a basic one takes only a couple of minutes to create. The first thing to do is save the current index.html file as a template via File>Save as Template. Choose a sensible name for the template, such as 'main' (avoid underscores and spaces).

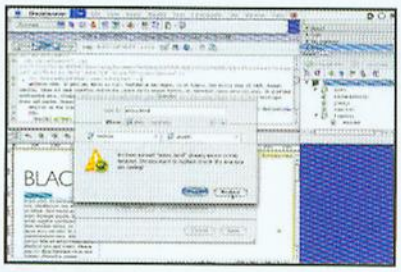


2 *Dreamweaver* asks whether you want to Update Links. Unless you want a Website that doesn't work, click Yes. By default, all areas within a template are locked, so you need to define an editable region. Doing so is very simple: select the area on the page you want to define as an editable region, Ctrl-click or right-click and go to Templates>New Editable Region (or go to Insert>Template Objects>Editable Region).

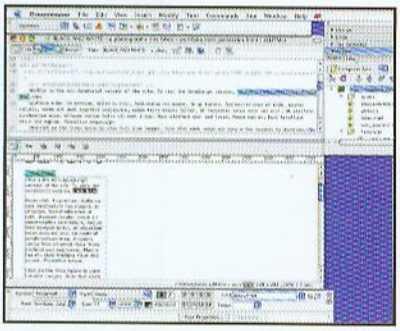


3 In the New Editable Region dialog box, name your editable region, again avoiding spaces and underscores. Click OK and you'll see the selected area now surrounded with a border, and with a tab at the top. This is a marker to highlight editable regions and won't be displayed on your Web page. Note that in the Files panel, you should now have a Templates folder with your template within. Never move either – templates fail to work if you do so.

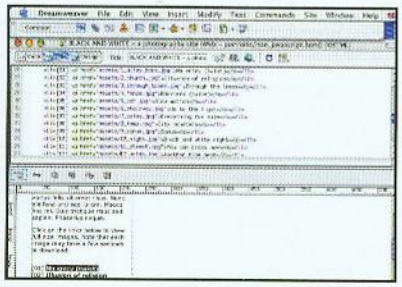
4 To create a new page based on the template, go to File>New and select the Templates tab. The left column provides you with a list of local sites that have templates – selecting one will show a list of those templates in the middle column. Selecting something from that list provides a visual preview of the template in the right column. Click Create to create a new template-based page.



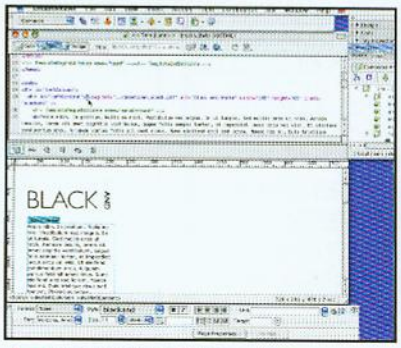
5 Note how when you open a template, it isn't blank – it contains all of the information in the saved template document. This is handy, because you often only have to change a few things when creating new pages. First, save the document as index.html, over-writing the previously created file (because that document isn't currently based on a template). When the warning dialog appears, click Replace.



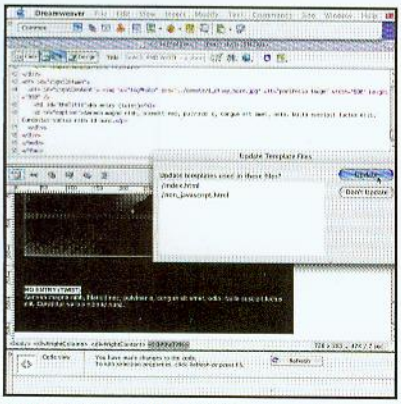
6 Save the page again, this time with a file name of 'non_javascript.html'. Some of the content needs amending and one addition is needed: a link back to the JavaScript version of the Website. This is added easily enough – type a paragraph of text and link some of the words to index.html.



7 All of the links within the list need changing, because they all rely on JavaScript. This is easiest to do in Code view. Remove everything from the links except for the href attribute, whose value should be the path and file name of the image that's being linked to (so <a href="assets/1_alley_bars.jpg"> should be the opening tag of the first list item). By default, these will open up in the same browser window as the Web page. To change this, you can click on each link and use the Properties Inspector to set the Target to _blank.



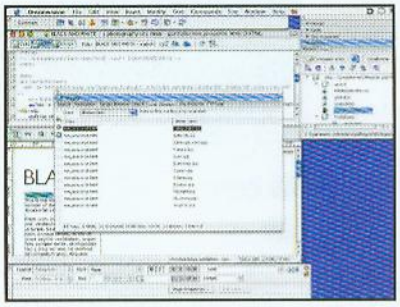
8 Save everything and close all open documents, then open main.dwt from the Templates folder. Have a quick look through the code to check that everything is in order. If there are unwanted spaces prior to or after tags, delete them. (For instance, we had a space in our title, between the opening <h1> tag and the element's content.) Although this probably won't affect the Website's display in any browsers, it's good to be sure.



9 Save the template and *Dreamweaver* automatically brings up the Update Template Files dialog, along with a list of files that rely on the template. You should always click Update upon seeing this, otherwise certain pages on your site may fall out of sync with the current design and bug fixes.

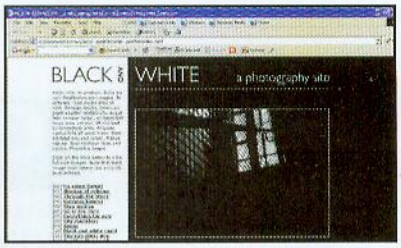
Part 10: Testing and potential browser bugs

The final thing to do is check the site in browsers and against W3 standards...

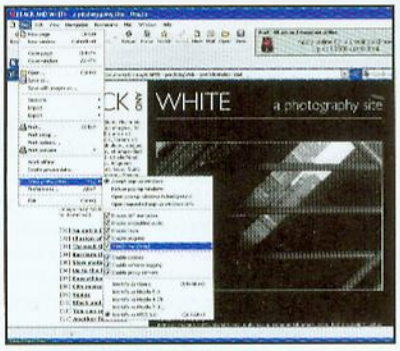


1 Go to Site>Check Links Sitewide to open the Link Checker. We had no errors in our site, so we faked an error report by removing the assets path from step 7 of the previous exercise. Depicted is the report; if you have broken links, you can amend the link in question from the dialog.

2 While building the site, we tested it in *Internet Explorer* and *Safari* on the Mac, so it's time to ensure everything's working in Windows browsers. All was well in *Mozilla* and *Internet Explorer 6* (depicted). The most common issue with *IE 6* is spacing problems between Web page elements, and this can often be fixed by removing white space from the mark-up around the offending element.

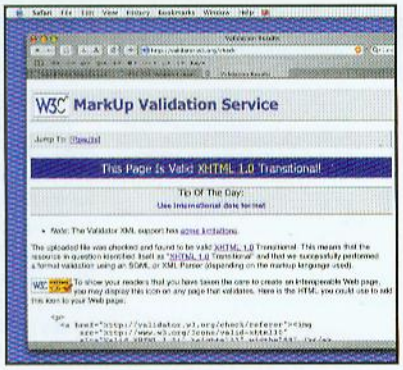


3 *Internet Explorer 5.5* for Windows is still very popular and has some unique bugs, so you should test in that as well as version 6. Again, things looked fine and were almost identical to *IE 6*. The most common problem in *IE 5.5* is with the box model. The browser incorrectly places padding and borders within an element's defined width; see **[w]** http://tantek.com/CSS/Examples/boxmodelhack.html for an explanation and workaround.



4 *Opera* is mostly standards compliant, especially in Windows. Again, we had no problems with our site. However, it does have some odd required defaults: for instance, *Opera* requires you to explicitly set padding to zero on the body tag and for list items (li), otherwise it includes spacing. *Opera* makes it easy to test your site without JavaScript, as depicted: toggle File>Quick Preferences>Enable JavaScript.

5 Although our Web page now seems to be working fine, it's still worth testing our work against W3's standards. You might think this is pointless, considering how much testing we've already done, but sometimes the validation tools at W3 pick up on errors you may otherwise have missed, and Web browsers can be surprisingly lenient with dodgy code that you can bet will mess up *something* when your site goes live. CSS files can be tested at **[w]** http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/ by upload, textarea or URL.



6 Likewise, you can test your HTML/XHTML at **[w]** http://validator.w3.org/. The validator returns both errors and warnings. The former must be corrected to ensure compatibly and valid code, while the latter are just for your information. (Note that the validator requires a page to have encoding and type specified, but *Dreamweaver* includes these things automatically.)

Onwards and upwards

And we're done... or are we?

To be honest, it doesn't end here – the best Websites are ones that change and grow, that evolve and keep visitors interested. As we've stated elsewhere, we recommend that once you've got a site online you should put aside a small amount of time each month to update it. Such updates don't have to be a complete overhaul – all you need to do in order to keep people interested is update the portfolio with your most recent work on a regular basis. Bear in mind that if you don't update your site for a number of months, potential clients probably won't think you're far too busy to update your site – they're more likely to assume that you simply haven't had any commissions!

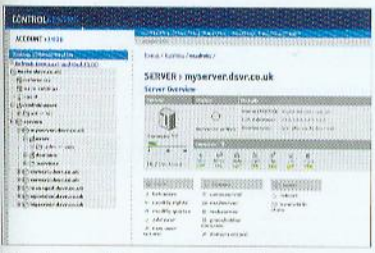
Also, don't rely on search engines to get the word out there. You need to be active in promoting your Website. This needn't always be a lot of hard work, and some promotional means are extremely simple: remember to add your URL to your email signature and to your next run of business cards; and if you have a number of regular clients, send them a brief email mentioning that you now have a site online. Word will soon get around! ca•p

CHOOSING A HOST

DesignerServers

Designer Servers, specialists in hosting for designers, explain what you should look for...

The ControlCentre from Designer Servers – your window on your hosting world.



Managing your Web server configuration is easy with Designer Servers' ControlCentre

Choosing the right host can be a bewildering prospect, full of acronyms, jargon and statistics that may leave you with more questions than answers. With such a huge array of hosting companies out there baying for your business, you can afford to be choosy. However, don't be seduced by price alone. You need to ensure that your host will provide what you need.

Hosting provision is usually offered as a package with varying specifications, and it pays to look closely at the detail. How you make your choice largely comes down to five main considerations: the Web server itself; bandwidth; control; price; and support.

The **Web Server** itself is the machine that your site will be held and served from. Apart from the machine specification, the key measure here is file space – the actual amount of storage space on the server, measured in MB. In essence this relates to the size of the hard drive on your machine. Keep in mind that unless you're hosting a large amount of data you will not need a huge amount of disk space. You can easily quantify your approximate requirement by checking the byte count on your working local directories.

Aside from the server itself, **bandwidth** or data-transfer is the most important measure that you should check. This is easily quantifiable and usually measured in GB/month. A host will always have a finite data transfer capacity and will assume that not all sites are going to be requiring bandwidth simultaneously – in essence it can be contended across the total user base. Some of the biggest hosts claim to offer 'unlimited bandwidth', but such claims tend to be very loosely defined, if not simply untrue, and it's worth digging for any contention ratios that may be hidden behind the marketing info. They will always carry a corresponding trade-off in reliability.

Taking charge

Control is a crucial factor in any choice. As a Web designer the more control you can have over your hosting the better. Any decent host will offer you a Web-based control interface, and the best will offer command line access too, for those who really like to get their hands dirty. Designer Servers' 'ControlCentre' is a perfect example, with every aspect of the hosting – from domain registration and system configuration through to billing and technical support – handled from one intuitive online administration area.

Nick Wills, Creative Director at Egovision (www.egovision.com), a London based online marketing and development agency, is one satisfied client who benefits from the unparalleled control that Designer Servers offer: "We chose Designer Servers as our hosting provider five years ago, and it's been a relationship that has grown with us. We needed a hosting option that would give us the freedom to run our sites the way we needed. With shell access to the command line and full MySQL administration, we are able to run our machines as if they were in our office with us but benefiting from the advantages of a secure managed service. Day-to-day running is facilitated by their excellent ControlCentre, allowing us full domain name, mail server and Web server configuration as well as direct contact to their support team.

"Starting out with a single entry level machine we have literally climbed through their server range and now run a top-range managed dedicated server alongside our regular Virtual Servers. With all of them managed in the same way it's a seamless and straightforward process."

Of course when you're starting out **price** is probably the single biggest factor in your hosting decision, but remember that a rock-bottom price may be mirrored by a corresponding shortfall in service. Beware of hidden extras and release fees. The best hosts will offer you a range of options together with a straightforward upgrade path. Designer Servers was founded with the aim of supporting the design and Web development community and quickly achieved this goal by offering a fully functional, free 20MB hosting package to all designers, with no nasty banners involved and no strings attached. Successful growth followed, thanks to word of mouth and a reputation for the highest quality of service. They still offer the free hosting to all designers today and have recently launched a entry-level paid-for service, the VS150, specifically aimed at the smaller designer with a limited budget.

Getting help

Finally, once you have made your choice, even if it's a good one, things can and do go wrong, and you need to know that you will get the proper **support**. Even the most reliable of servers fall down occasionally, and your host will rely on connectivity from upstream providers who face similar challenges. When something goes wrong that you have no control over, the only thing that will give you some peace is knowing that the your host is on call and working on the problem, no matter what time of day, and you'll want to be fully informed at all times. At other times you might find that you have a problem that you just can't get your head around, and your website is just not being served despite everything being set up 'properly' – at least in your mind. You've probably got something misconfigured or you have forgotten the simplest of things, and at times like these you need to turn to the experts. Your host must have the technicians on hand to get inside your server and troubleshoot the problem for you. This will save you valuable time, and possibly your sanity too.

Take Control of Your Hosting with Designer Servers – www.dsvr.co.uk

About Designer Servers

Designer Servers (www.dsvr.co.uk) is one company at the forefront of Web hosting which has all the bases covered and typifies what you should look for in a hosting solution – control, configurability, and high quality of service at a price unmatched by many other providers. Their Virtual Server solutions range from a single site package right up to managed dedicated server systems all tailored for the creative needs, and within reach of even the tightest of budgets. And with a growing list of over 3,000 clients they are currently the designers' choice for Web hosting in the UK.

Creating a corporate logo

Design a logo, business card and other stationery to get your company noticed...

Designing a logo for yourself or for a client can be a long and complex process, because logos don't live in isolation – they are at the hub of an organisation's visual message. Logos are inextricably linked with colour, typeface, shape, application, signage and the other ephemera of business.

But by careful planning and studying the brief, you can work out precisely what's required. Doing your homework pays dividends with imaginative and creative designs. Understanding and appreciating the client – who they are and what they do – is the secret. It's no use designing a club flyer logo full of bizarre futuristic typefaces for an accountancy business. When designing a logo for your own business, don't lose sight of these factors either.

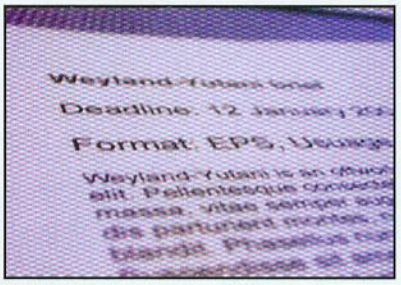
This tutorial will take you through the process of creating a new corporate identity – logo, corporate colours and typefaces – and then how to use those elements to design stationery, a leaflet and even a simple Website. All you need is a copy of *Adobe Illustrator CS* (although you can use the tutorial with earlier versions of *Illustrator*, too).

You'll find two *Illustrator* files on the cover CD this month, in Software\Tutorials\In The Mag\Illustrator logo: initial_logos.ai and final_logo.ai. These will help you work through our tutorial for yourself!

Expertise is provided by Jason Arber, who is the co-creator of Pixelsurgeon, the popular arts and media portal. By day, Jason works for one of the world's largest advertising agencies, creating the online media campaigns for clients such as adidas and Vodafone. By night, he can be found tweaking Pixelsurgeon's Website. He's also a photographer and typeface designer. Find out more at **[w]** www.pixelsurgeon.com

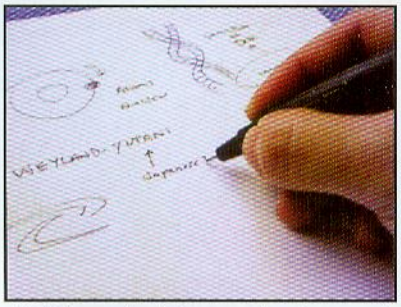
Part 1: The basics

On something as important as a new identity, it's best to take your time and do a bit of groundwork...



1 At the start of a project, it's important to get a brief from the client so you're both clear about what's required. If the client doesn't provide one, write one yourself and get the client to agree to it. Even if you're creating a logo for yourself, it's a good idea to get everything down on paper.

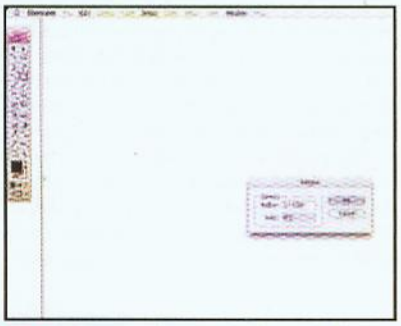
2 Do a little investigation into what kind of corporate identity the client already has. Check out stationery, leaflets and their Website. It's often a good indication of how graphically savvy they are.



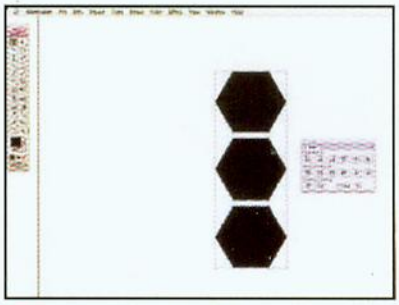
3 Before you touch the computer, get a pen and paper and start sketching some ideas. It's faster than a computer and can save a lot of time. Save your notes and drawings for reference or scan them in if you've drawn something promising.

Part 2: Building simple shapes

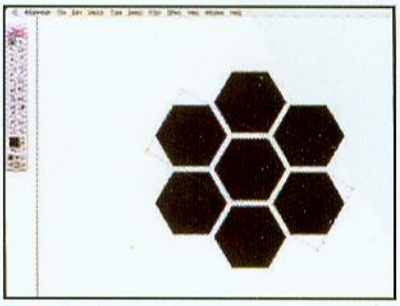
With a few ideas to pursue, we begin producing concept sketches in *Illustrator*, a great tool for creating the basic components that make up most logos...



1 Create a new document in *Illustrator* (File> New) and select the Polygon tool from the toolbox. Click on the document and create a hexagon. The precise radius is unimportant because it will be scaled later.



2 Once you've created the hexagon, Option-drag (Mac) or Alt-drag (Windows) the polygon to create two more hexagons. Hold down the Shift key to constrain them in a vertical line and use the Distribute Objects button in the Align palette to make the space between them equal.



3 Select the top and bottom hexagon, copy and paste them in front (Edit>Paste in Front) and with the shapes still selected, double-click the Rotate tool in the toolbox and select a value of 120 degrees. Repeat with the rotated shapes to complete a honeycomb pattern.

Swoosh hell

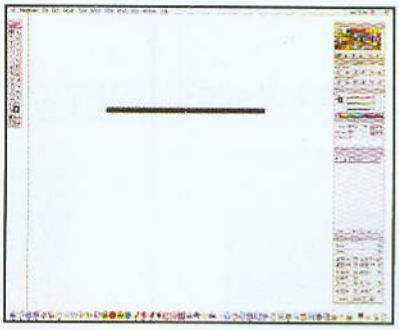
If you want your logo to be different, steer well clear of swooshes...

When designing logos, there is a trap that many fall into: swoosh hell. Swooshes, or sweeping arcs, are dynamic, they convey movement and energy and are easy to knock out in *Illustrator*, but it seems that every other company's logo has one. Once you notice them, they seem to be everywhere, and are a good example of designers getting lazy.

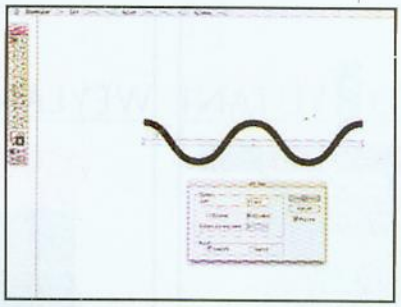
That's not to say that every logo with a swoosh is unworthy of mention. Nike, after all, appears to be doing quite well with its version. However, if you want your logo to stand out and be a bit different, the last thing you should be doing is using *Illustrator*'s Pathfinder tool on a pair of ovals to create an arching abstraction that is the visual equivalent of reality game shows. There are even Websites dedicated to mocking swoosh logos, such as Alice Matsumoto's collection at [w] http://50cups.com/swoosh/ (pictured right) and the original classic that everyone should read, eNormicom ([w] www.enormicom.com/) by 37signals.

Part 3: Creating DNA

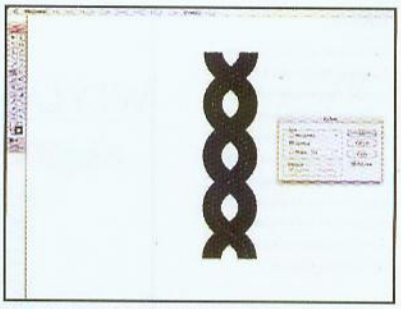
Starting with a simple straight line, it's possible to create the famous double helix in a few simple steps...



1 Use the Pen tool or the Line tool from the toolbox and create a short straight line. Give it a weight of 10 points by typing a value in the Stroke palette or using the Weight drop-down menu.



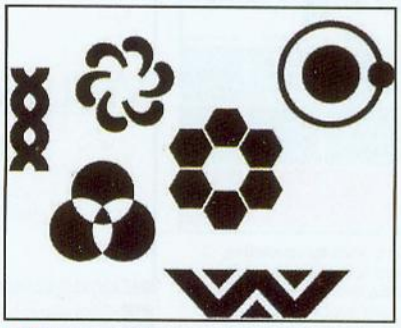
2 With the line selected, choose Zig Zag from the Filter menu (Filter>Distort>Zig Zag) Make sure the points are smooth and adjust the Size and 'Ridges per segment' sliders until you have the first half of the DNA helix.



3 If necessary, rotate the wavy line so that it's vertical. Copy the line and Paste in Front. With the copy selected, choose Reflect from the toolbox and reflect the line vertically so that it creates the recognisable DNA shape.

Part 4: Putting it all together

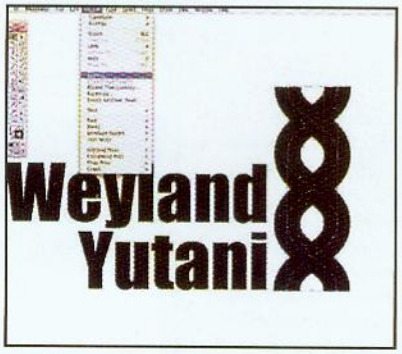
The secret of a good logo is the combination of a distinctive shape with appropriate typography...



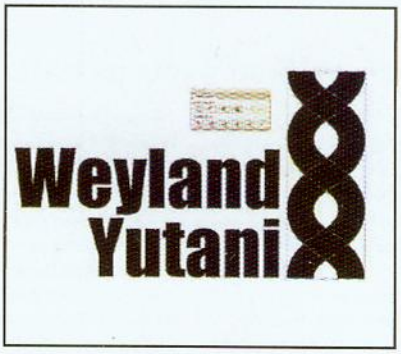
1 Using *Illustrator's* tools, it's possible to create innumerable shapes and patterns. Because the client in this instance is a Bio-Tech company, the shapes, while fairly abstract, hint towards medical and chemistry subjects.

2 Although some logos, such as Nike's swoosh, can survive without text, most logos need a logotype, or supporting text, to tell the public what the product or company is. So you'll need to experiment with different typefaces. The font in red is clearly inappropriate for a Bio-Tech company.

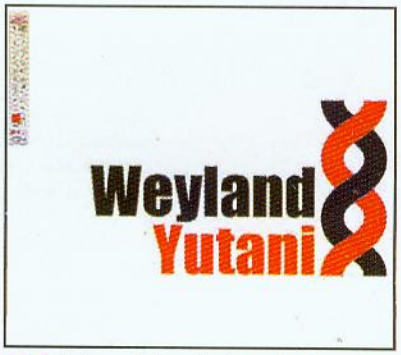
3 Try different combinations of shape and typography to create unified designs. A font that doesn't work with one shape might be ideal with another, so keep swapping and moving things around until you see a theme emerging.



4 The DNA helix is heading in the right direction, but it needs to look more like a helix. Select the shape and choose Expand... from the Object menu. OK the default settings. This will convert the stroked lines into filled shapes.



5 With the new shapes selected, click the Divide button in the Pathfinder palette. This splits the helix where the shapes overlap. To make the individual elements easily selectable, ungroup them (Object>Ungroup).



6 Introduce a little contrasting colour to create the impression that helix is looping around itself. It doesn't matter at this stage what the colour is because we'll be tackling that in more depth in the next section.

Part 5: The importance of colour

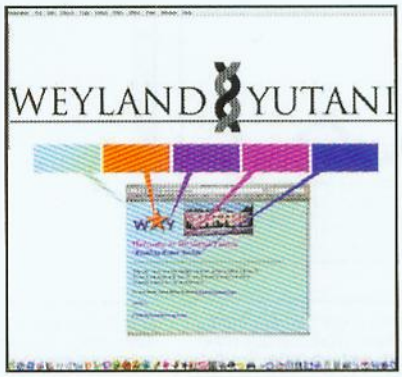
The right colour can make all the difference to an identity, such as red becoming shorthand for cola…

CMYK

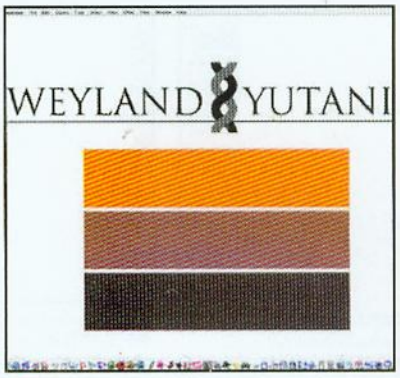
CMYK is an acronym of Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Key (Black), the printing inks used to create the full spectrum of colours seen in most books, posters and magazines. Although there have been attempts to improve on the formula, such as Hexachrome, which uses six inks, CMYK looks like it'll be around for a while yet.

Spot colour

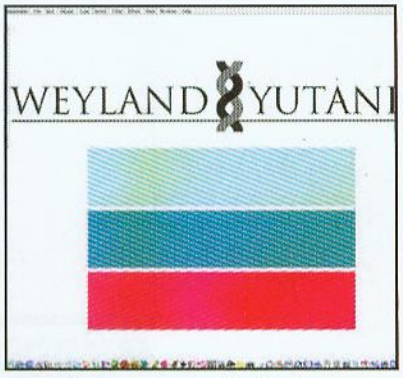
Although CMYK, or 'process colour', is good at matching most colours, it can fail miserably when attempting to match fluorescents, metallic colours, pastels and extremely bright shades. In these situations, the answer is to use a 'spot' colour, or an ink specially mixed to be that exact shade.



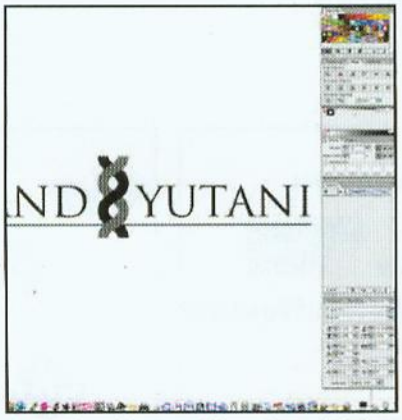
1 Take a look at the client's existing material to see if it's possible to build an element of consistency by reusing some of the colours. In our example, the client has too many colours fighting for attention.



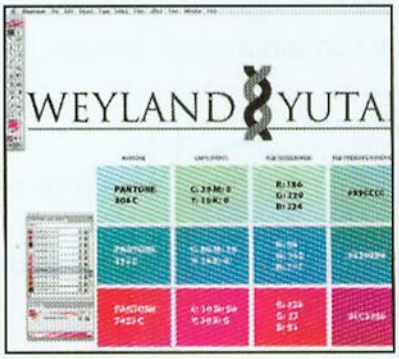
2 Experiment with different colour combinations to see if you can find a set of colours which answer the client's brief. Oranges and browns seem too warm for the slightly clinical feel of a Bio-tech company.



3 In this case, we've simplified the client's original colour set into a more harmonious and rational trio of colours. The blues hint at hospitals and labs, while the magenta injects an interesting modern feeling of life for contrast.



4 To be usable across all the media in which the logo might appear, the colours have to work in different colour spaces such as Pantone and CMYK for print, RGB for screen, and the limited palettes of Web-safe and handheld devices.



5 Check your chosen colours by converting them to the different colour spaces using the Colour palette. Use the fly-out menu on the palette to choose Web-safe colours and adjust the sliders until the colour is as close as possible. Repeat with CMYK and choose Pantone colours that match (Window>Swatch Libraries>PANTONE Solid Coated).

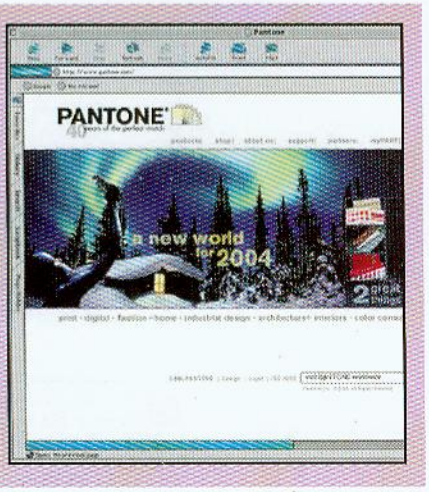
6 Once you're happy with your colour choices, apply them to your design. The reason for applying colour at this late stage is so that the underlying design works independently from colour if necessary, rather than relying on colour.

Colour palettes

Choosing the right colour palette to identify your product…

Colour palettes are families of colours selected specifically for use across a range of communications material. A palette can be used to reinforce the perceived attributes of an organisation, and is therefore an integral part of a corporate identity. Successful use of colour can lead to a company or organisation being recognised by the colour alone, such as IBM's blue, FedEx's purple-and-orange or BP's yellow-and-green. Consistency is the key to successful colour use, which is why it's important to spend time tweaking the colour values in different colour spaces. Although expensive, a collection of Pantone reference books is extremely important for the professional designer.

Pantone ([w] www.pantone.com, pictured on the right) has spent 40 years attempting to make it easier for designers and printers to match colours. Pantone provides swatches of its standard inks printed on various papers and substrates so that a single reference code will mean exactly the same thing to someone on the end of a phone who can't see the shade of blue you're pointing at.



Part 6: Introducing typography

For a complete identity, the logo and colours are just part of the story. You also need complementary typefaces…

Type and Illustrator CS

With the latest version of *Illustrator*, Adobe has changed the way its flagship vector application handles text, to bring it more in line with *InDesign*. When opening files created by older versions of *Illustrator*, you'll be asked if you want to update the text, which can lead to unexpected line breaks. If you say no to the update, the text appears like a placed graphic and isn't editable.

WEYLAND YUTANI
These fonts do not compliment the logo
These fonts do not compliment the logo
These fonts do not compliment the logo
These fonts do not compliment the logo

1 Different typefaces suggest different moods, eras and degrees of seriousness. In the example shown here, none of the typefaces are suitable as corporate fonts for our Bio-Tech company. They are either too silly or too informal.

2 To cover most areas where you'll need to use your corporate typeface, you'll generally have to try and find a suitable headline typeface and a text face. This can be the same typeface or two different typefaces, but it's rare to use more than two faces because the overall feel and impact can be diminished.

3 In addition, the faces you choose need to have an 'office/Web equivalent' for situations when you can't use your premium typeface (such as body text on a Website). Web designers are familiar with the small group of typefaces that are found on almost all computers, such as Times, Arial, Verdana and Trebuchet.

4 Your first stop might be to use the same typeface you used in your logo (in this case, Trajan). Although it's a beautiful typeface, Trajan only comes in uppercase characters, which may limit its use for general text applications. The overall effect is too flowery for a Bio-Tech company.

5 Myriad is a conservative face, with enough personality to be interesting. It has a large x-height, which makes it extremely legible at small sizes. The text face is Caslon, a serif font. Serif fonts generally make large amounts of text easier to read, and the Bio-Tech company might have plenty of reports and technical documentation.

6 The office/Web equivalents are Arial and Georgia, and it's only the real typographical purist who would object if these typefaces were used when the premium fonts were unavailable.

Looking for the right type

The choice of fonts can be vast. We help you to refine your search…

With tens of thousands of typefaces commercially available and probably as many more floating around the Web in the form of shareware or freeware, tracking down the right typeface can seem like an impossible task. For this reason, there's a tendency to fall back on old favourites, but, instead, you could try limiting yourself to a few key foundries rather than the all-or-nothing approach.

T-26 ([w] www.t26.com) has recently revamped its site, and finding interesting display faces is a doddle. House Industries ([w] www.houseind.com) has carved a niche for itself by crafting typefaces which hark back to the hand-drawn type of the 50s, 60s and 70s. The company has successfully branched out into the world of body text with the Chalet family of fonts. Peter Bruhn's small foundry, Fountain ([w] www.fountain.nu), is home to an impressive mix of practical and fun fonts, such as Mälmo Sans, Monteverdi and Sauerkrauto. The real kings of well-crafted fonts are Jonathon Hoefler and Tobias Frere-Jones from The Hoefler Type Foundry ([w] www.typography.com, pictured right), with every font oozing quality and usability.

Part 7: Creating a business card

Business cards need to tell the recipient a little about the company, so putting everything together correctly is hugely important...

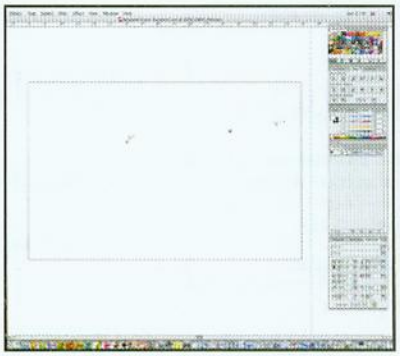
Cutter Guides

Cutter Guides are non-printing plates which are used by the printer to create a cutting die that can trim paper into unusual shapes. The same principle can be applied to other printing effects, such as embossing, foil-blocking and varnishing.

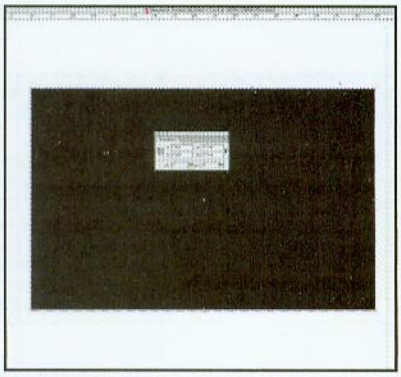
Thinking different

In the 'creative' world it's very common to make business cards memorable by doing something different with them. You can use amusingly-shaped cut-outs, transparent 'windows' and hologram inserts, or print them on unusual materials such as foil, plastics, metals, wallpaper or even furry fabric. With a little imagination and a cooperative printer, you're limited only by your budget. In any case, though, the basic principles of design remain the same: you need to prepare the content to be printed on the card and some form of cutter guide or template.

1 In *Illustrator*, create a new CMYK document with dimensions of 85mm x 55mm, which is the standard size for business cards. There's nothing to stop you from designing in other sizes – just be aware that if it doesn't fit in a business card holder, it may not serve its purpose.



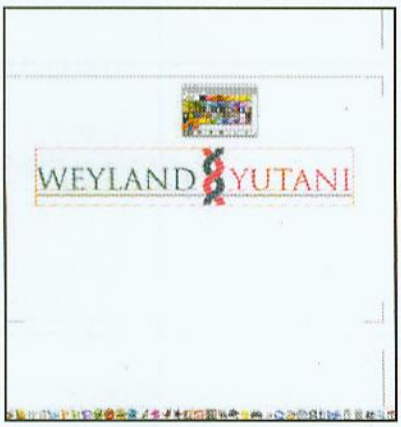
2 Call up the rulers (View>Show Rulers) and drag the ruler crosshairs to the top-left corner of the document to establish the XY origin. Drag guides from the ruler onto the document to indicate the bleed area, which is usually 3mm outside the document edges.



3 Now you need to draw a rectangle on the page with the Rectangle tool from the toolbox, then use the Transform palette to fine-tune the shape and origin so that it sits exactly on the business card dimensions.

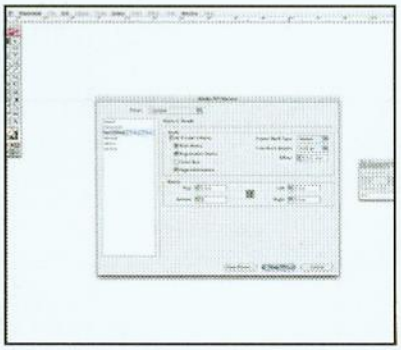
4 All the stationery is going to have rounded corners. So that the printer can trim the cards exactly how you want, you need to create a Cutter Guide, which will print onto a separate plate. With the rectangle selected, choose Round Corners from the Filter menu (Filter>Stylise>Round Corners) and choose a radius of 5mm.

5 Choose an unused Pantone colour for the Cutter Guide (the exact colour doesn't matter – it won't be printed), but make sure the Overprint checkbox in the Attributes palette is selected so that it doesn't knock out the card design.

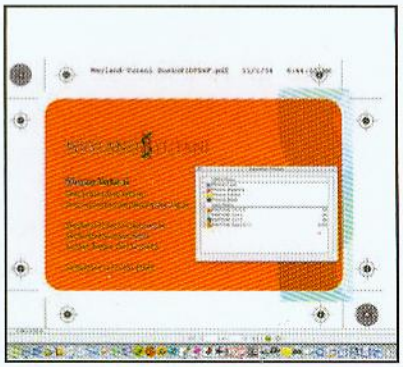


6 Lock and hide the Cutter Guide layer and on a new guide copy and paste a Pantone version of the logo. It should bring the Pantone colours used with it to populate the Swatches palette. If not, re-colour the logo using the correct Pantone colours.

7 Scale the logo and add the details using the corporate fonts. Use the double helix to add some interest to the composition by scaling it up so it becomes an abstract shape but has links to the logo.



8 Save the business card as a PDF (File>Save...). The compression settings are not so important because there are no photographs or bitmap images. However, setting the correct marks and bleeds is crucial. Make sure your card has Trim and Registration marks as a minimum and that the bleed has been set to 3mm.



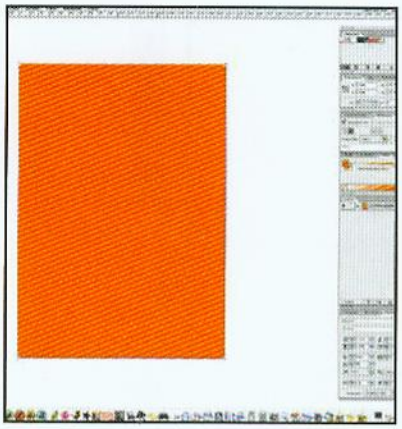
9 If you have a full copy of Adobe *Acrobat 6.0*, you can check the PDF to make sure the printing plates are correct – use the Separation Preview (Advanced>Separation Preview) to do this. Because the Cutter Guide is set to overprint, it appears translucent.

Part 8: Additional stationery

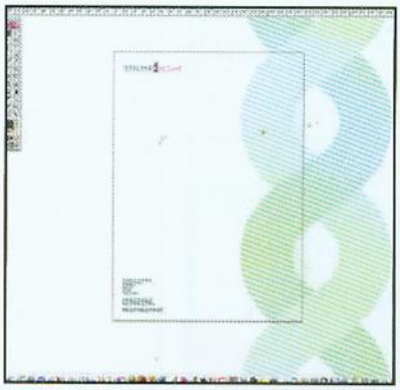
As well as business cards, most companies will need letterheads, compliment slips and even invoices...

PDF files

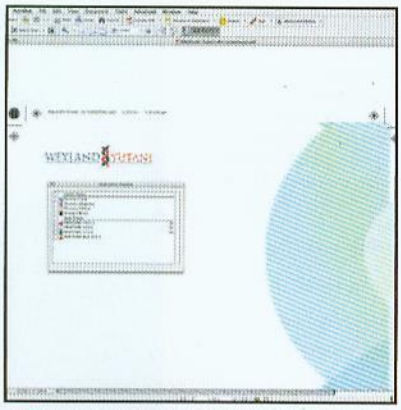
PDF (Portable Document Format) is the underlying technology that powers many Adobe applications, such as *Acrobat Reader*, *Illustrator* and *InDesign*. It's the universal way to pass files to a printer or a client for approval because it maintains the fonts, images, graphics and layout of your design.



1 Create a new A4 CMYK document (210mm x 297mm) and create a Cutter Guide using the same method as used to create the guide for the business cards.



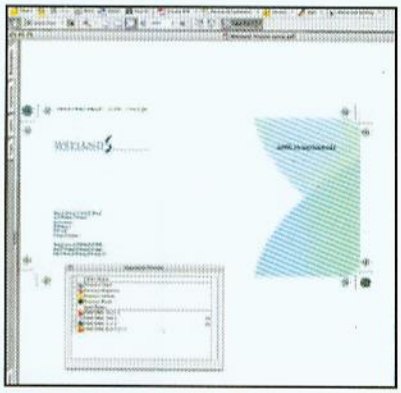
2 Don't be afraid to go really large with the abstract shapes as they become watermarks behind the eventual text on the letterhead. For limited companies set up in England and Wales, they need the phrase 'Registered in England and Wales', the registered office and the Company number.



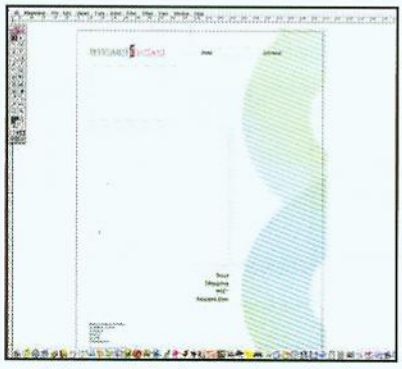
3 Save as a PDF again and if possible check that the plates are correct, using *Acrobat*. When printing spot colours, the last thing you want is a stray colour made up of CMYK plates that might cost a lot to fix at the printers.

4 For the compliment slip, repurpose the letterhead by duplicating the file and changing the Document Setup (File>Document Setup) so that the height is 99mm. This shrinks the page dimensions, but not the elements on the page, so these may have to be repositioned to fit.

5 In a matter of moments, you have a compliment slip. The only thing to add is the standard phrase 'With compliments' and you're done. Save as a PDF with the same settings as the business card and letterhead.

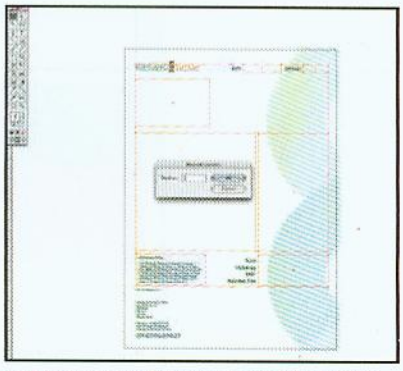


6 Check the PDF in *Acrobat*. Using the Separation Preview, you can click the plates on and off to see how the colours overprint and knock-out. In the example shown, the Cutter Guide overprint and Pantone 7425 have been hidden.



7 Stationery for invoices usually consists of empty boxes where information will later be printed. All invoices need at least the date, the invoice number, space to list all the items and a total amount due. Simply use the letterhead as a template and add the boxes with the Rectangle tool.

8 It's also important to make sure any terms and conditions are clearly stated on the invoice. If you have a lot of terms and conditions, you may find it easier to print them on the back of the invoice rather than trying to squeeze them on the front.



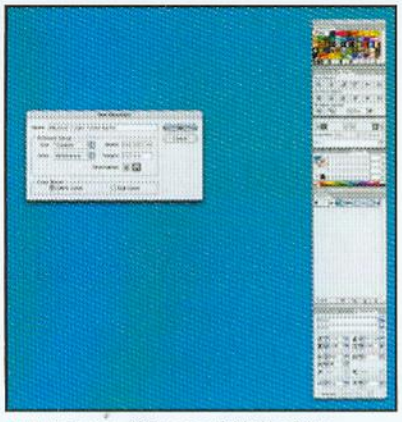
9 In keeping with the round-edged look of the stationery, use the Round Corners filter to give the boxes curved edges with a radius of 3mm (like concentric circles, the inner corners have to be smaller than the corners that will be die-cut on the invoice itself).

Part 9: Producing other printed material

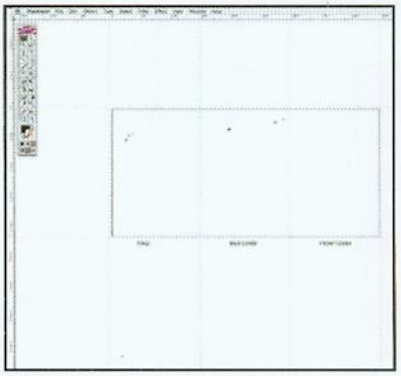
Some businesses also require additional printed material such as flyers, promotional leaflets and annual reports...

Page layout

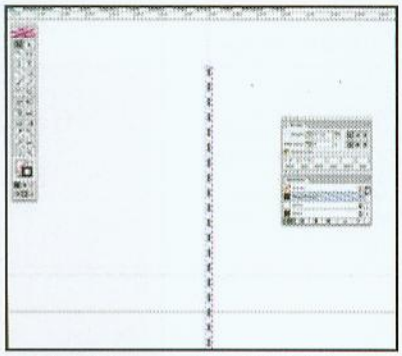
Although *Illustrator* is perfectly suited to many layout tasks, its single page structure means that creating multi-page documents becomes increasingly difficult. If you're trying to coax *Illustrator* into doing this, perhaps it's time to look at a dedicated page-layout application, such as Adobe *InDesign CS*.



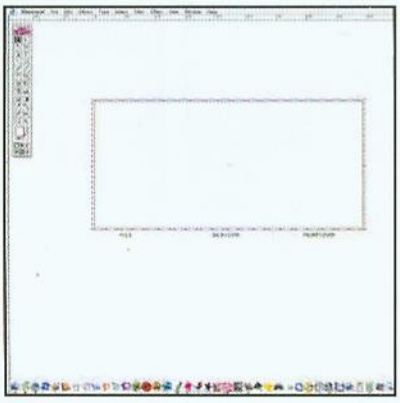
1 Design an A5 six-page folded leaflet in *Illustrator* by creating a new CMYK document 444mm wide (three times the width of the portrait A5 page) and 210mm high. Click the OK button.



2 Drag the ruler crosshairs to the top-right corner of the document and then drag guides from the ruler to divide up the document into the three outer pages of the leaflet (the inner pages will be a separate document). You might find it useful to name the pages.

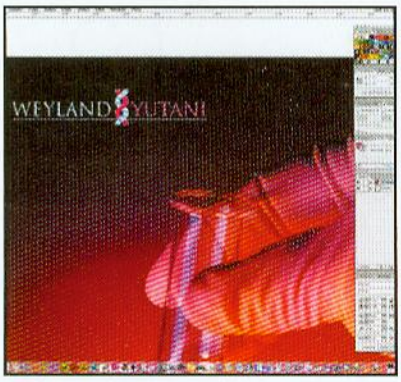


3 Dotted lines are used in print to indicate folding lines, as opposed to trim marks. To create dotted lines, use the Pen or Line tools to draw a vertical line. The line should be coloured with the special Registration colour that appears on all plates. Using the Stroke palette, give it a weight of 0.5 point, a dash of 2 point and a gap of 1.5 point.



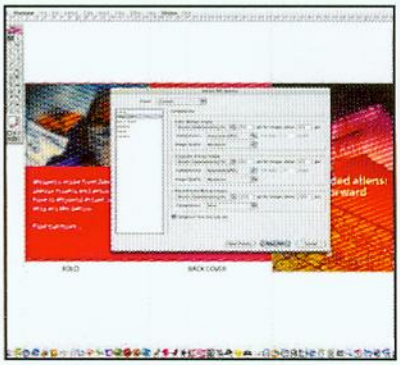
4 So that the dotted line doesn't appear on the artwork itself, draw a white rectangle occupying the extent of the bleed to hide the lines. The printer will see the dotted lines extending from the artwork and know to fold there.

5 Use the Place command (File>Place) to import photographs into the *Illustrator* document. Images can be linked or embedded using the Links palette. If the images are linked, they must be sent together with the file to the printer.



6 Place a CMYK version of the logo onto the cover. If the cover is dark, you may need to adjust the colours using the established palette of corporate colours. This demonstrates the real need for a selection of colours to choose from under the corporate banner.

7 Fill out the rest of the leaflet, which is a test of how well you understand the brand or corporate identity you have created. It's useful in helping to fine-tune and refine the identity and see how the colours, fonts and imagery all work together as a cohesive whole.



8 Because there are photographic images in the leaflet design, care must be taken to specify the correct downsampling for bitmap images. For print, downsampling to 300 pixels per inch for colour and greyscale photographs, and 1,200ppi for bitmap line art is sufficient.

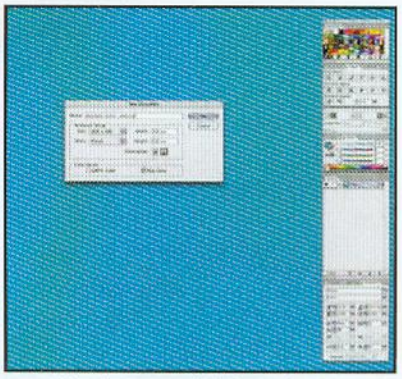
9 Repurpose the document to create the inside half of the flyer. Rename the pages to avoid confusion. It's often useful to create a small mock-up of the folded flyer so you can write the page names on it, straighten it out and copy the names to the *Illustrator* document.

Part 10: Entering the digital world

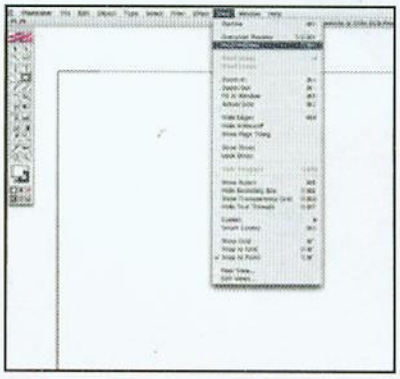
Be prepared to use your newly designed logo in the digital realm of Websites, presentations, phones and hand-helds…

Illustrator and Flash

An alternative route for getting your new logo and corporate identity on the Web is by using Macromedia *Flash MX*. *Illustrator* exports vector graphics in .swf format that can be imported into *Flash*. *Illustrator* can even create simple *Flash* animations, but you'll probably want to tweak and optimise them in the *Flash* application before putting them on your site.

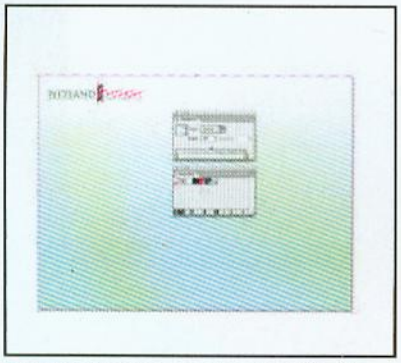


1 Although it's not as fully featured as dedicated Web-creation software, it's possible to build Websites using *Illustrator*, or at least design the graphics for Websites. Create a new RGB document, set the units to Pixels and set a width of 800 pixels and a height of 600 pixels.

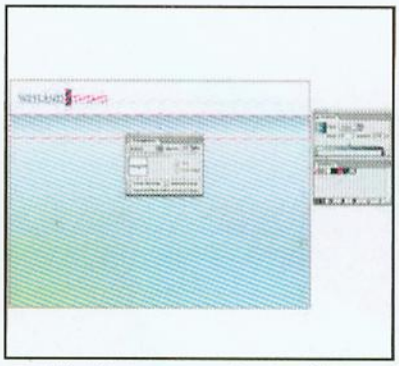


2 A handy feature in *Illustrator* is the Pixel Preview accessed from the View menu. In *Illustrator's* normal view, vectors stay smooth as you zoom into them. However, with Pixel Preview turned on, as you zoom in beyond 100 per cent you begin to see pixels, as if *Illustrator* were a bitmap editor.

3 It's possible to toggle between the two views, and the example shown demonstrates what happens when turning Pixel Preview on and off. An additional feature is the ability to snap to pixels (View>Snap to Pixel) so that rectangles, for example, remain sharp-edged.



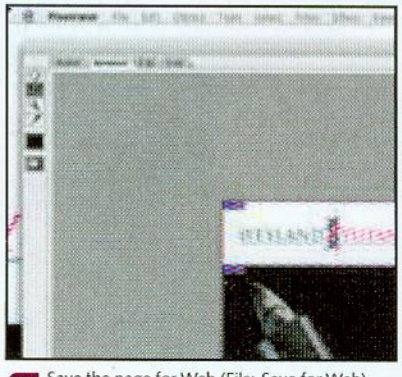
4 Draw a background rectangle and fill with a gradient from the Swatches palette. Edit the direction of the gradient with the Gradient tool from the toolbox (just click and drag in the direction you want the gradient). Edit the colour by dragging colour chips from the Swatches palette to the Gradient palette.



5 Adjust the transparency of gradient-filled rectangles using the Transparency palette. Transparency in *Illustrator* is object-based rather than layer-based, and while the effects are similar to *Photoshop's*, they are not exactly the same, so expect to get unusual results if you're used to *Photoshop* layer modes.

6 Images pasted into the document from the clipboard become embedded graphics rather than linked graphics. In Pixel Preview, large images scaled down appear to be 72dpi but have the advantage that they can be resized without having to be rendered.

7 Chop the Web page into discrete chunks which can have individual URLs applied to them for links and buttons. Divide the image using the Slice tool from the toolbox, and apply URLs to slices with the Attribute palette.



8 Save the page for Web (File>Save for Web) and each slice can have its own Web compression settings. This enables you to balance the trade-off between file size and quality. Hitting Save will create an HTML file with all the code necessary to reassemble the page in a browser.

9 By repeating the process for different pages, a simple site can be created quickly and easily, but if you were serious about building a Web solution, you'd be better off using Macromedia *Dreamweaver MX* or Adobe *GoLive CS*. ca-p

Practical plug-ins

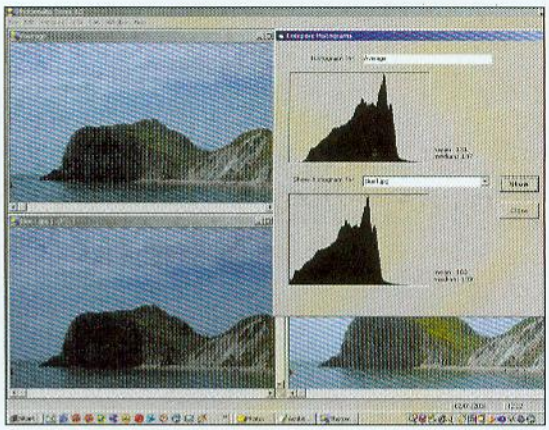
Photoshop CS and the new generation of image-manipulation packages include some powerful plug-ins, but there's still a place for third-party add-ons...

There are stacks of new features in *Photoshop CS* which make the job of image manipulation easier. New functionality makes quick photographic correction and general image distortion simpler and faster than ever before. However, there is always a demand for third-party plug-ins.

Adjusting your images using curves and levels will normally sort out most of your colour and tonal problems, but this is often at the cost of hours and hours spent making tiny adjustments. New features within the latest generation of manipulation packages have made this process more user-friendly, but there are still many third-party filters that can make your life even easier. We bring you the best of the current crop of tools for making effective adjustments with just a few mouse-clicks...

PHOTOMATIX PRO

Company **Multi Media Photo** Website **www.multimediaphoto.com**
Host **Standalone** Platform **PC** Price **$99**



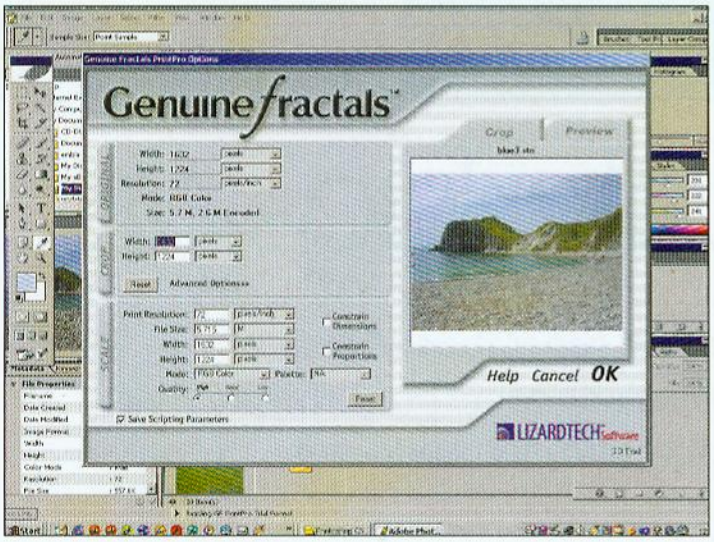
You may have seen a function on your camera called bracketing and wondered what it's for (other than taking up valuable memory space with three almost identical images).

Well, the point of bracketing is to take three images with slightly different exposures, each exposure capturing different details and tones within your composition. In other words, this function enables you to highlight the darkened areas (such as shadow) and correctly expose the lighter areas (such as sky), to create three images that will contain the full detail of the scene before you.

Normally, you would then take the three images into your chosen image-manipulation program and extract the best areas of each to create a perfectly exposed image. Alternatively, you could use Photomatix, which enables you to quickly optimise the contrast of bracketed photos.

This filter works by combining the multiple exposures and blending them to increase the dynamic range of the final image, effectively producing an HDRI, and so preserving the details of the original scene in both the highlights and the shadows. It uses any of five methods based on its proprietary algorithms and then computes the optimal combination of aligned images. The resulting image should be perfectly exposed with plenty of detail in both bright and dark areas.

VERDICT **4/5**



GENUINE FRACTALS

Company **Lizard Tech** Website **www.dcpsystems.co.uk**
Host **Photoshop** Platform **Dual** Price **£199**

One very common problem for any designer is having a source file that's too small for your needs. There are two ways to get around this situation: you can carefully step the document size within *Photoshop* using the Image Size setting to increase it and adjust the sharpness, or you can try to source a larger image from the creators.

The second option is rarely possible, but with Genuine Fractals you can expand the image to the size you need with a usable quality. This plug-in from Lizard Tech enables you to create resolution-independent images from an original image of any size, and increase this up to 600 per cent, although this does depend on the actual quality of the source file.

The results are impressive and, although it doesn't take too close an inspection to see some quality loss within the image, it's a great improvement over enlarging directly within *Photoshop*. The deterioration of the image using Genuine Fractals is far less than you might imagine.

VERDICT **4/5**

COLOURWASHER

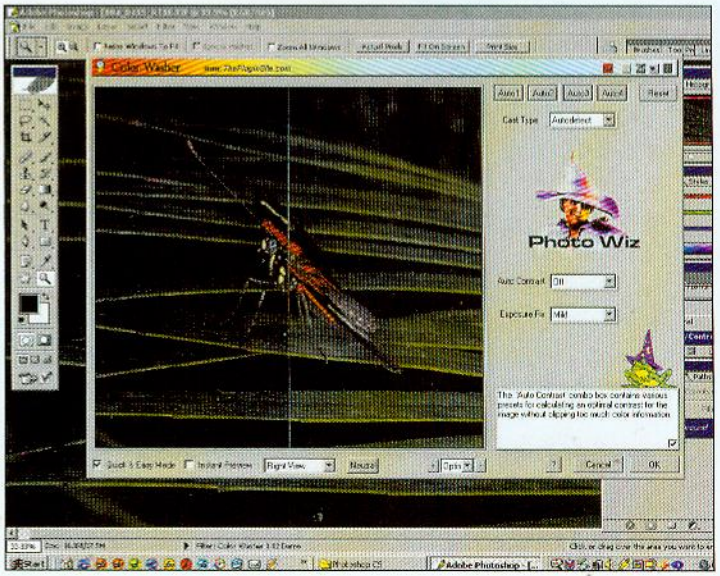
Company **The Plugin Site** Website **http://thepluginsite.com**
Host **Photoshop** Platform **PC** Price **$49.95**

ColourWasher helps with correcting the colour, contrast and exposure aspects of your photos by using a range of automatic, semi-automatic and manual tools. The interface can be split to give you a side-by-side example of this plug-in's effect on the image.

The filter includes four automatic modes, which enable you to select an area of the image and then automatically adjust the options until you find the settings that give your image the best results. Manual controls enable you to adjust the cast type through seven different options, and also adjust, auto-contrast and fix the exposure. The effect of each adjustment to the image can be quite dramatic.

The best use for this plug-in is in improving photographs that are under-exposed, and it works well to help increase the image information and contrast between the lines.

VERDICT **3/5**



HI-SPOT

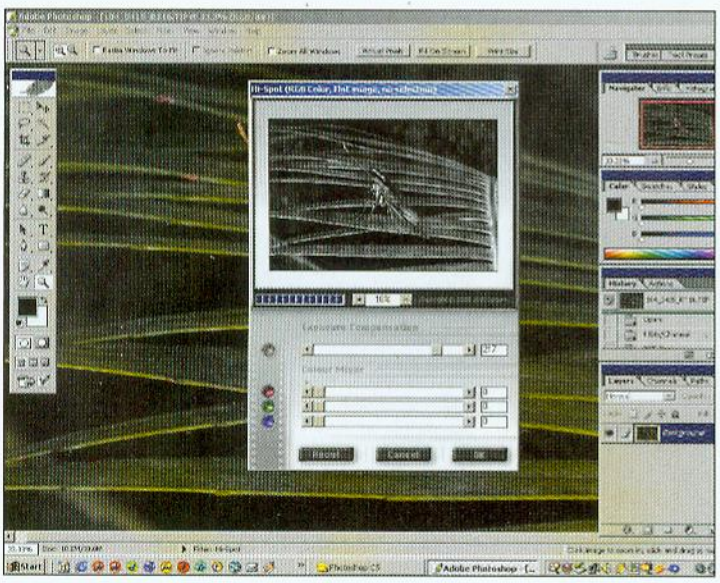
Company **Cybia** Website **www.cybia.co.uk**
Host **Photoshop** Platform **PC** Price **Free**

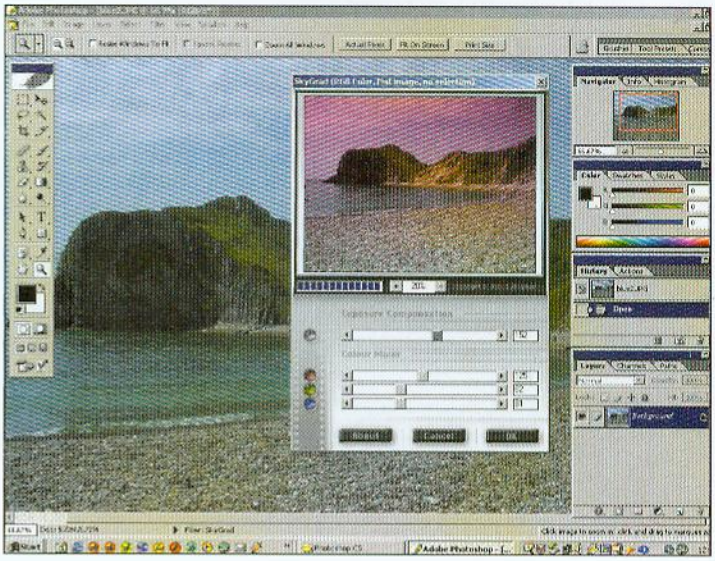
Printing images for faxing or photocopying can often be a nightmare, with some image detail getting lost beyond recognition. One way to get around this is to convert the images to black-and-white and increase the contrast, which will help to a certain extent but will still leave the image without some detail.

One alternative is to quickly convert the image to halftone (the method used in newspaper production). This will degrade the finer details of the image but keep the basic visual information needed. Another option is to use Hi-Spot, a plug-in that converts your snaps into high-contrast monochrome images automatically. It also gives you the option to add sepia tints using quick, effective adjustment with three RGB sliders.

You end up with simplified black-and-white images with sharpened edges and a reduced tonal range. These images then reproduce well after multiple copies, and are better than using half-toning.

VERDICT **3/5**





SKYGRAD

Company **Cybia** Website **www.cybia.co.uk**
Host **Photoshop** Platform **PC** Price **Free**

Any well-shot landscape can look stunning, but after a day walking in the hills photographing some of the most beautiful scenery you've ever laid eyes on, your resulting images can be let down by bleached-out and unformed skies. The quality of the sky's colours and cloud details can often make or break a picture of an urban or rural landscape and because we can't always rely on Mother Nature to create the perfect backdrop to our masterpieces, Cybia has done the next best thing by creating this free *Photoshop* plug-in.

SkyGrad is a filter that enables you to mimic the effect of applying a *Photoshop* gradient fill, so no matter how bleached out your skies are, you can create dramatic lighting effects to replicate any time of day or year quickly and effectively. The results are stunning, making this an indispensable plug-in for a one-use effect. SkyGrad is sure to help save many landscapes from the effects of dull skies.

VERDICT **5/5**

SHADOW

Company **Andromeda** Website **www.andromeda.com**
Host **Photoshop** Platform **Mac** Price **$109**

This plug-in can help with all sorts of imaging situations. Pick up almost any magazine or look at many Websites and you'll see how popular the use of shadows is these days – these help to add an extra element of depth to an otherwise flat image.

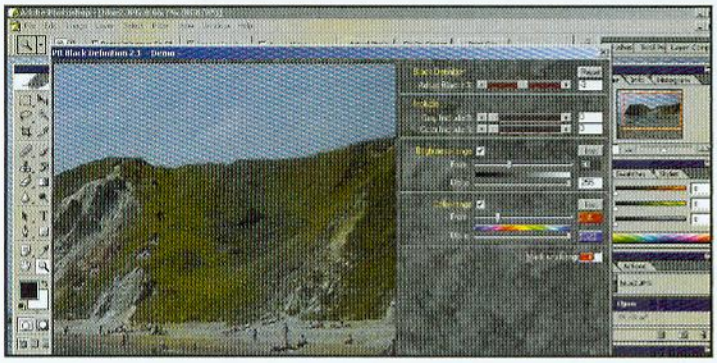
Whether you're 'cutting out' product shots and want to lift them off the page or you've carefully removed the subject from a background and want to place it in another place, Shadow is the perfect plug-in to create the realistic effects you'll need to complete your image.

The added features available in this filter include options for numerous styles – opaque, simulated backlighting, and projected drops – to create the ideal effect for every image and image style.

VERDICT **4/5**

BLACK DEFINITION

Company **Power Retouche** Website **www.powerretouche.com**
Host **Photoshop** Platform **Dual** Price **£20**



This is a useful plug-in for rescuing photographs that are low in contrast because of over- or under-exposure. The dialog box that appears when you open the filter enables you to have complete control over the black content within your working image.

It works by enabling you to choose from a couple of different options, using either the greyscale or colour information of an image to help increase the black intensity. The first option converts and darkens any greyscale to increase your image's black saturation, with the degree of sensitivity being fully adjustable. The second option is to convert the darker colours, which works effectively for defining edges and lines that would otherwise be lost in some lower contrast situations.

This plug-in works to best effect when coupled with some of the other Power Retouche plug-ins, all working perfectly together to build a very effective image-restoration package.

VERDICT **4/5**

EVALUATE

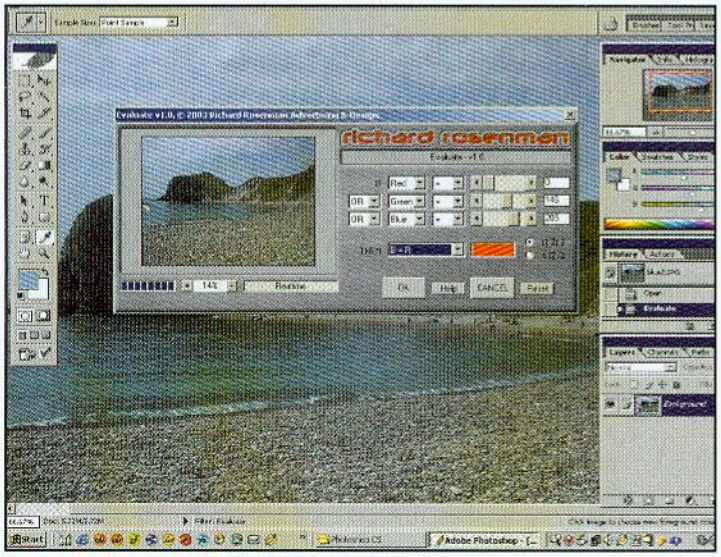
Company **Richard Rosenman** Web **www.richardrosenman.com**
Host **Photoshop** Platform **PC** Price **Free**

If you're looking for a plug-in that encompasses a large selection of image-processing operations, Evaluate may well fit the bill. Adjustments include colour replacement, colour inversion, colour swapping, greyscale conversion, colour clamping, colour multiplication and division, colour trigonometrical mathematics, pixel blurring, pixel grain, and more besides.

You'll be hard-pushed to find something here that *won't* be of use to you, although with the amount of choice available it's easy to get lost. However, lots of options don't mean dramatic results – the effects only subtly adjust the overall quality, making them ideal for fine-tuning your images.

As with other Richard Rosenman plug-ins, all these adjustments can be very effective. Also, being able to adjust so many elements within one working environment can help to speed up your work, although it will take a little practice to achieve the best results.

VERDICT **3/5**



PHOTOGRAPHIC EDGES

Company **AutoFX** Website **www.autofx.com**
Host **Photoshop/standalone** Platform **Dual** Price **$179**

Like other AutoFX plug-ins, Photographic Edges comes with an intuitive interface that's easy to use and quick to learn. Additionally, this plug-in can be used as a stand-alone application, which is a blessing because it does become very memory dependent once the different framing effects are applied. The tools for creating and applying a frame effect are all controlled through simple drop-down menus. You can save your settings for use with other images at a later date.

One feature that really makes this plug-in worthwhile is the ability to paint your frame around the image, enabling you to blend the image into the canvas. You can also select other images that can be brushed as transparent layers over the image to give a different and unique look. It's an excellent plug-in for finishing off your picture with your own unique frame.

VERDICT **4/5**

FOCUSFIXER

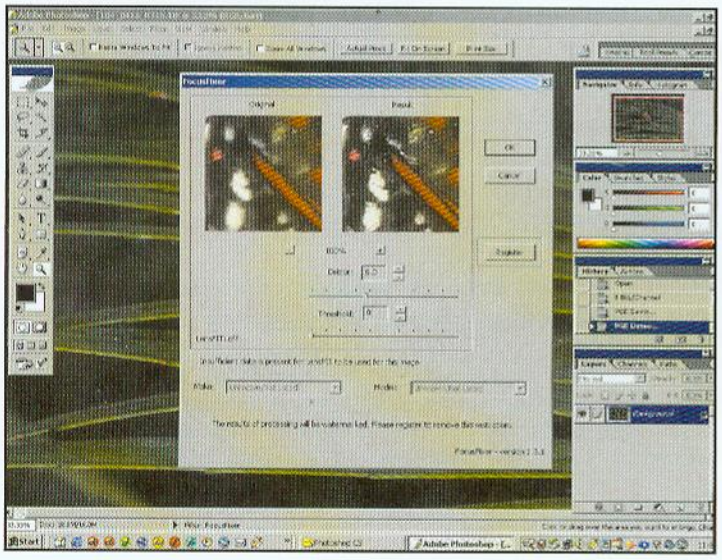
Company **FixerLabs** Website **www.fixerlabs.com**
Host **Photoshop** Platform **Dual** Price **$49**

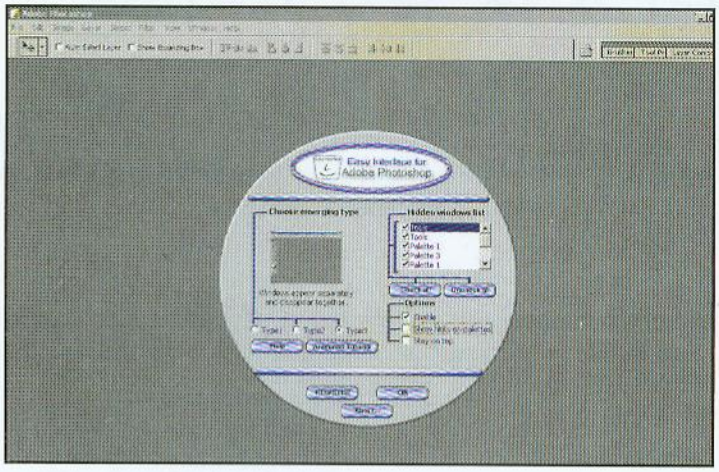
FocusFixer is one of the simplest focus-fixing filters on the market, with a straightforward dialog box that enables you to adjust the effects with two simple sliders. These adjust the Deblur and Threshold settings – the effects are then shown in a small results window at the top of the screen. This sits next to the same section shot of the original picture so you can quickly gauge the results of your adjustments.

The preview windows have been well thought-out and enable you to click and move either image around to a specific area you wish to view. The image in the other preview window corresponds with the movements, so both windows always show the same area of the image. This selection can also be zoomed to 100 per cent so you can see the effects on the finer details.

FocusFixer is an effective and quick way to help improve the sharpness of images that may otherwise be lost in a complete blur.

VERDICT **5/5**





EASY INTERFACE

Company **Digital Element** Website **www.digi-element.com**
Host **Photoshop, and a variety of other applications** Price **$19**

Easy Interface will quickly become one of the most useful additions you can buy to enhance your *Photoshop* experience. Unless you're lucky enough to own a large-scale monitor, you'll probably be more than familiar with the problem of a cluttered screen. Easy Interface enables you to select each of your *Photoshop* tool palettes and choose whether they stay as standard, or are hidden just off screen, helping to clear your workspace of obstructive palettes.

Some of the best workflow tools on the market stay out of sight once installed. This is exactly what Easy Interface does: after installation, a dialog box appears enabling you to quickly apply an effect to each palette and to choose one of three ways for them to be displayed. After the initial set-up, simply click the icon in the toolbar at the base to start the plug-in and access all the options.

Once you're happy with the settings, you can access a new tool or palette by simply moving your mouse to the edge of either side of the screen. When you move the mouse after selecting a tool or action, the tools will automatically be re-hidden. This is a perfect plug-in which can't fail to make your *Photoshop* life easier.

VERDICT **5/5**

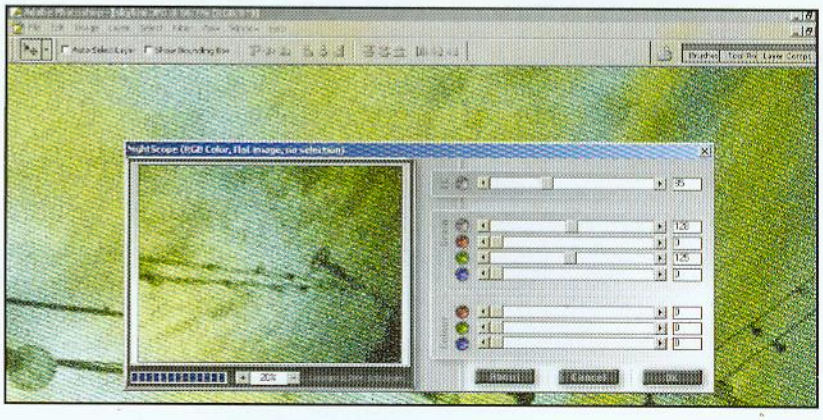
NIGHTSCOPE

Company **Cybia** Web **www.cybia.co.uk** Host **Photoshop**
Platform **Dual** Price **Free**

NightScope is Cybia's latest addition to its new Fotomatic range of digital film FX plug-ins for *Photoshop*. The interface and usability of this filter are excellent, and if you feel the need to create the effect of night vision goggles, this is a quick and easy solution. The effect of the filter is quite simple. First, it converts the image to black-and-white, then it enables you to apply a slight blur and add grain to create the effect you would expect in night-time imagery.

A nice feature that extends this filter's use to other photographic styles is the option to manually adjust settings. You are given complete control over the adjustment of the red, green and yellow channels, and you can also change the effect of the overall grain and grain colour. With a little experimentation, the results you can achieve are excellent and the preview window is a good size for previewing your image.

This filter would be limited in its application if, as its name suggests, it was for the sole purpose of imitating night vision, but you can also adjust the settings to get some excellent black-and-white landscape and portrait images. A good choice for creating romantic effects for portraits, and it's free!

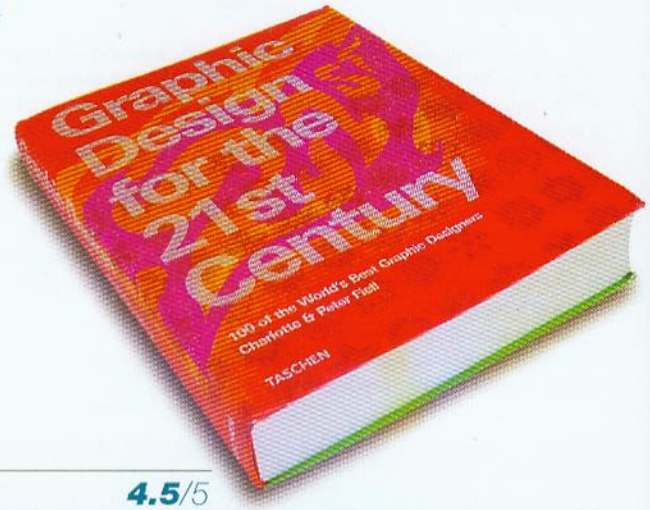


VERDICT **5/5**

BOOK REVIEWS

GRAPHIC DESIGN FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Authors **Charlotte and Peter Fiell** Publisher **Taschen** Price **£19.99**
ISBN **3-8228-1605-1** Web **www.taschen.com**



This weighty tome is recommended reading whether your interest in graphic design is just a passing phase or a professional obsession. The authors have done a splendid job of selecting the work of 100 exciting designers from around the world and getting them to pass comment on their trade.

The book opens with a brief essay on the rise and rise of design culture, giving the reader a bit of historical perspective. This is fairly informative but probably best saved till after you've scoured the book's remaining pages.

While you won't find every designer you might hope for in here, the work on display is generally of a high standard (occasionally blindingly so) and the production quality is suitably glossy throughout its 600-plus pages.

Each designer has been allocated just enough space to make a meaningful comment alongside their work, without straying into unwarranted territory. This text gives you some idea of the designer's mind-set and makes for light, enjoyable reading while browsing through the array of artwork.

VERDICT **4.5**/5

UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

Authors **W Lidwell, K Holden and J Butler** Publisher **Rockport**
Price **£27.50** ISBN **1-59253-007-9** Web **www.rockpub.com**

This is addictive reading. If you don't already know about principles such as Fibonacci sequences and Hick's law then you're in for a rare treat, even if you eventually decide you know better. Designers of any discipline will find this book a useful tool, particularly if you're looking for ideas.

The book's subtitle is: *100 Ways to Enhance Usability, Influence Perception, Increase Appeal, Make Better Design Decisions, and Teach through Design.* Not particularly snappy, but it does round up the ground covered by the aesthetic wisdom that the authors have collected together.

Each law or observation is given a double-page spread where the concept at stake is briefly and, in general, very well explained. Then a practical example is highlighted — for instance, Le Corbusier's use of the Fibonacci sequence to derive a set of ideal ratios for use in design.

The book works well because it doesn't presume to instruct on creativity but instead adds some useful flesh to ideas most people would accept, if they were ever to think of them.

VERDICT **5**/5

THE ART OF PROMOTION

Author **Lisa L Cyr** Publisher **Rockport** Price **£27.50**
ISBN **1-59253-010-9** Web **www.rockpub.com**

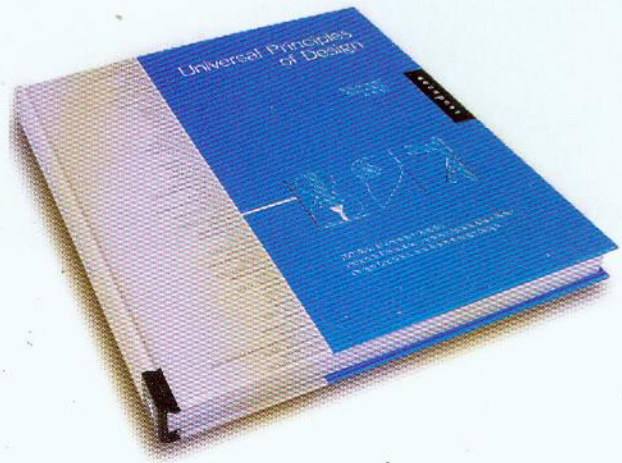
If you're considering employing some novel production process but are concerned about its effectiveness then this book could save you considerable grief. Through a set of case studies, *The Art of Promotion* does the preliminary research for you.

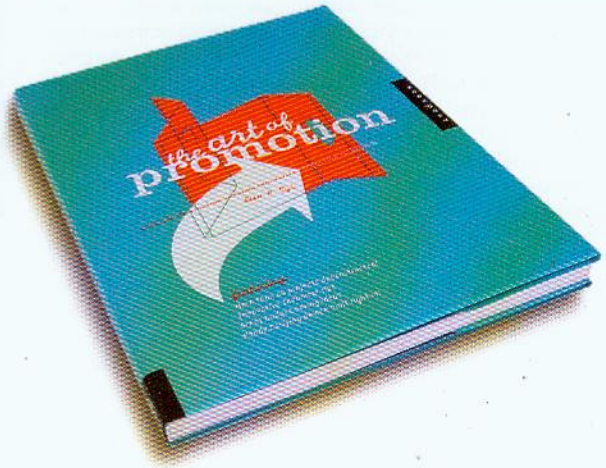
Unfortunately, it's hard to tell whether the results in each case are successful without the physical objects in front of you and this limits the book's use.

The four chapters look at surfaces and printing techniques, constructions, bindings, and add-ons, such as toys or gifts. Whether it's a change-of-address card or a magazine, each product is put into context before the approach is explained. Although some of the ideas are weak, the production processes are what's really under scrutiny.

Whether it's holographic prints or metallic inks, designers love to experiment with interesting techniques. Aware that the associated risks might deter many from experimenting, this book attempts to allay some fears by showing how others have distinguished their work. Ultimately, the results are not that convincing.

VERDICT **3.5**/5





DREAMWEAVER MX & FIREWORKS MX SAVVY

Author **Christian Crumlish** Publisher **Sybex** Price **£37.99**
ISBN **0-7821-4111-0** Web **www.sybex.com**

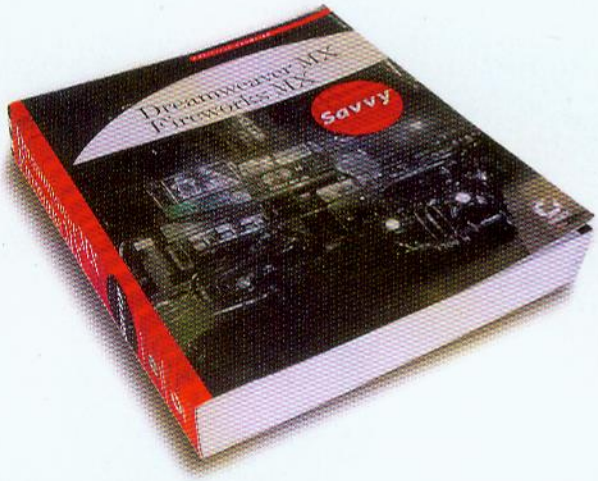
Any designer, regardless of primary discipline, will need to build a Website at some time in their career. If you plan to use Macromedia's two Web-publishing standards — *Dreamweaver MX* and *Fireworks MX* — then this book equips you to use both at expert level.

This isn't a title aimed at the casual user. Over 31 chapters, this book covers every aspect of creating a fully functioning Website, from menus and multimedia to database connectivity and XML. Although some of the subjects under consideration are rather technical (SQL, for example), the author manages to keep the text light and easy to read. No mean feat.

Tutorials are well-paced and documented, giving even beginners plenty of information while extending to tasks which only professional developers would need to consider. The accompanying CD is also a worthy addition. Sybex has included demos of *ColdFusion*, *Flash*, *FireWorks* and *Dreamweaver*, along with some handy extensions and the usual tutorial files.

The only criticism of this book is that it lacks colour, making it seem daunting at first appraisal. Overall though, this is a first-rate manual.

VERDICT **4.5**/5



100 HABITS OF SUCCESSFUL GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

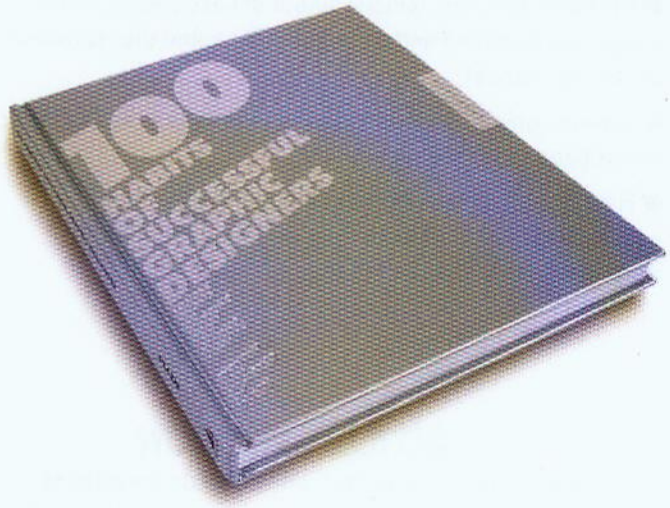
Author **Rockport** Publisher **Rockport** Price **£27.50**
ISBN **1-56496-977-0** Web **www.rockpub.com**

There's more to being a designer than just designing. Dealing with clients, handling workflow and staying abreast of technology are just some of the common concerns faced by the profession. *100 Habits* takes a look at how a selection of successful designers manage and integrate these considerations into their work.

The book divides the business of design into eight categories including Self-promotion, Working with Clients, Education and Partnerships. Under each heading, various designers are asked to explain their approach, giving examples of work that embodies their approach. This can be very thought-provoking. For example, Hideki Nakajima on the place of technology says simply, "Acknowledge the value of the analog process" before explaining that his staff use computers for him.

The overarching aim here is to help integrate the necessities of working in design into the creative process. In other words, to help develop an integrated approach to your work so that you aren't battling with yourself constantly. For anyone who finds themselves in a similar situation, this could be a very rewarding read.

VERDICT **4**/5



PHOTOSHOP CS FOR DUMMIES

Author **Deke McClelland and Phyllis Davis** Publisher **Wiley**
Price **£16.99** ISBN **0-7645-4356-3** Web **www.wiley.com**

The appeal of the Dummies series is clear: making complex software seem easy to use. In places, this book succeeds in that mission; in others, it's hamstrung by its formulaic approach. Still a good introductory title, but this is far from ideal for anyone with serious *Photoshop* ambitions.

It's clear from the outset that the authors know what they're talking about — Deke McClelland even wrote the *Photoshop 7 Bible*. So the instruction is very good throughout, the language is conversational and the tutorials are easy to follow. The only problem is that the number of tips and lists of do's and don'ts can get in the way.

The book is split along fairly traditional lines but with a lot of space devoted to basic interface and technical stuff like resolutions before moving on to look at the tool set. Unfortunately, the colour plates have been restricted to 16 pages near the front of the book and this can make the text feel quite heavy.

VERDICT **3.5**/5